CAREERS AND ED: COMIC BIZ, ONLINE LEARNING, AND FRESH HIGHER ED P15
NINE GREAT TAX MYTHS BY DAVID CAY JOHNSTON P10

GUARDIAN

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Radical zones

A burgeoning new queer performance scene in the Bay Area is redrawing boundary lines. P28

(Clockwise from top left) Keith Hennessy, Rachael Dichter, Laura Arrington, Jesse Hewit, Julie Phelps, Aylin Guvenc, Ernesto Sopprani, Honey McMoney, Harold Burns, Tessa Wills, Jorge De Hoyos. | GUARDIAN PHOTO BY MATTHEW REAMER



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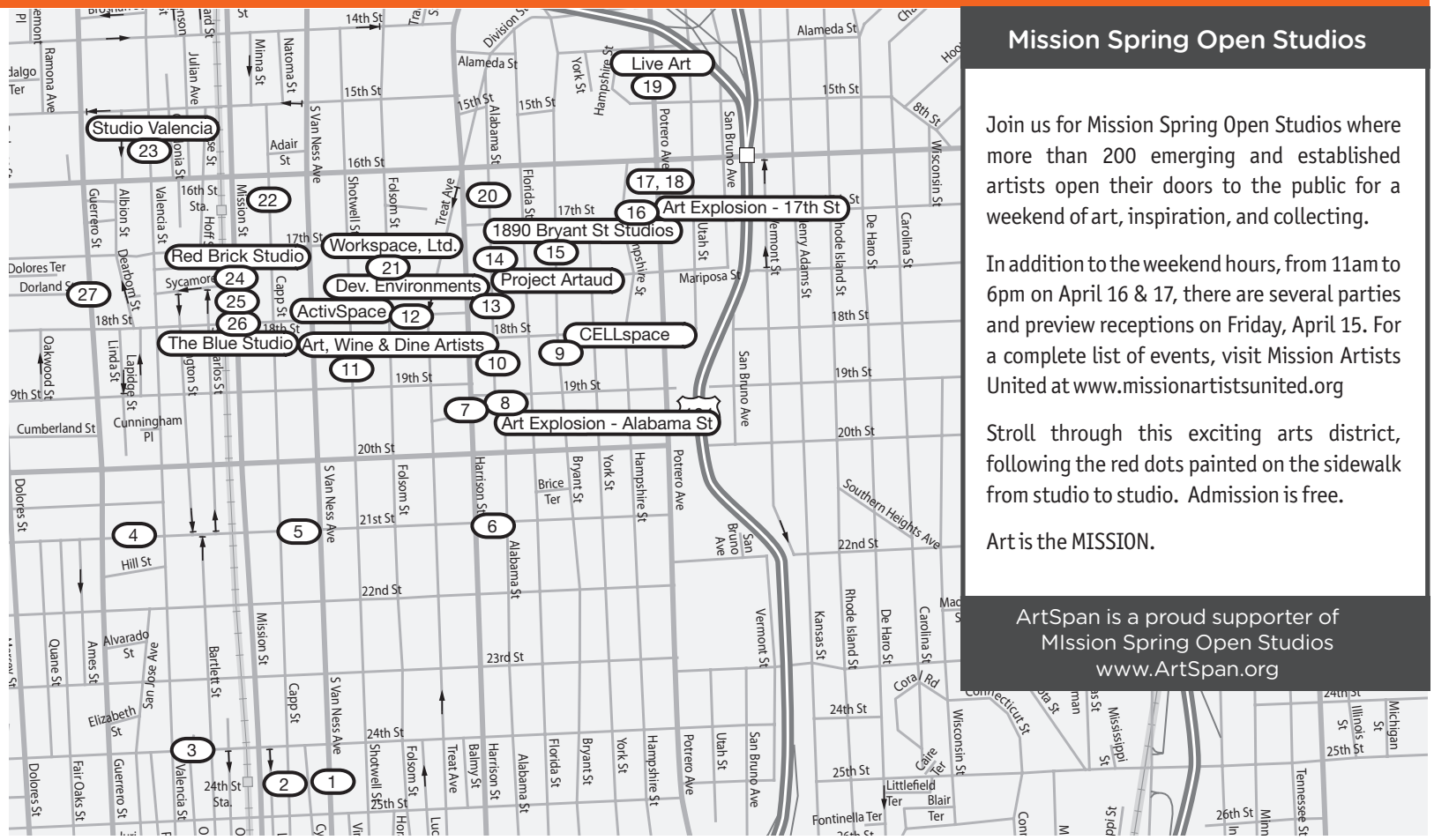
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1 Daniel Arcos, 1334B S. Van Ness Avenue, 24th St./25th St., Printmaking

2 Brett Houser, 939 Capp Street, 24th St./ 5th St., Oil

3 Anna Fizyta, 3358 24th Street, Valencia/Bartlett, Printmaking

4 Luis Montealegre, 3315 21st Street, Happy Mountain Art, Guerrero/Valencia, Acrylic

5 Rachel Sager, 3132B 21st Street, Capp/S. Van Ness, Mixed

6 Shaz Lawrence, 2858 21st Street, Alabama /Harrison, Acrylic

7 G.B. Sunny Fisher, Art Explosion Harrison, 2345 Harrison Street, #142, 19th St./20th St., Mixed

8 Art Explosion Alabama Street Studios
744 Alabama Street, 19th St./20th St.

Tosha Albor, Drawing
Tim Aldridge, #228
Agathe Azzis, #347, Photography
Steve Baker, #241, Acrylic
Steven Brock, Book Arts
MacKenzie Davis, #312, Oil
Aiko Designs, Jewelry
Scott Erwert, #340, Acrylic
Kathy Fujii-Oka, #203, Mixed
Kayla Garelick, #379, Photography
Brian Greif, #220, Acrylic
Christie LaRussell, #202, Acrylic
Roger Lingren, #338, Acrylic
Linda Lingren, #314A, Jewelry
Summer Makovkin, Drawing
Colleen Marlow, #364/365, Mixed
Steven Maynard, #208, Photography
Lauren Mendez, Oil
Nining Muir, #351/353, Oil
Nataliya Tyaglo, #113, Acrylic
Victoria Veedell, Oil
Shayna Yasuhara, #329, Drawing

9 CELLspace
2050 Bryant Street, 18th St./19th St.

Corey Best, #5, Sculpture
Vanesa Gingold
Heiko Greb, Sculpture
Mallika Prakash, Acrylic
Pirate Vereker, Acrylic
Beth Waldman, Acrylic

10 Art, Wine and Dine Artists
614 Alabama Street, 18th St./19th St.

Katerina Connearney, Oil
Hilla Hueber, Oil
Angela Oswald, Acrylic
Valerie Scott, Acrylic

11 silvia poloto, 442 Shotwell Street, 18th St /19th St., Mixed

12 ActivSpace
3150 18th Street, Treat/Folsom

Sara Burgess, Book Arts
Angela Cross, Digital Art
Talbot De Vil, #328, Mixed
Daniel Diaz-Tai, Oil
Bobby Fisher, Oil
Jaisen Glogowski, #303, Mixed
Peter Howells, #532, Mixed
Chrissy Lynn, Photography
Augustus Manly, #105, Mixed
Kevin P. Mosley, Mixed
Jeff Oakes, #253, Fiber/Textile
Deborah Reed, # 336
Geof Teague, #358, Photography
Gina Teichert, Oil

13 Developing Environments
540 Alabama St, Mariposa/18th St.

Don Blasingame, Photography
Hugh Buck
Miranda Caroligne, Fiber/Textile
Jennifer Ewing, # 307, Sculpture
Cathy Feiss, Glass/Ceramics
Leo Germano, Photography
Corinne Gobet, Ceramics
Shawn Ray Harris, Photography
Kristine Mays, Sculpture
Andrey Semyonov, Watercolor
Janet Silk, Drawing
Gabrielle Thormann, Watercolor
Debra Walker, Oil
Pamela Z, # 214, Mixed

14 Project Artaud
499 Alabama Street, Mariposa/17th St.

Laurie Anderson, #314, Gouache
Keith Bjorkman, Printmaking
Robt Burg, #120, Acrylic
Anna Dal Pino, #216, Pastels
Lily Earl, #205, Digital Art
Erica Kremenak, Oil
Saiman Li, #218, Photography
Javier Manrique, Oil
Nartan Sipma

15 1890 Bryant Street Studios
1890 Bryant Street, Mariposa/17th St.

Cassia Appel, #302, Jewelry
Annie Arrasmith, #202, Mixed
Michael Beckler, #204, Mixed
Beka Brayer, #311, Mixed
Flaming Hakama by Elaine, #313, Textile
Heather Capen, #203, Oil
Elaine Coombs, #318, Acrylic
Vera Costa, #207, Mixed
Anna Efanova, #211, Oil
Gabrielle Gamboa, #212
Sevilla Granger, #310, Acrylic
Peggy Gyulai, #305, Oil
dk haas, #311, Mixed
Michelle Inouchi, #210, Acrylic
Michelle Jader, Oil
Michael Kerbow, #303, Oil
Michele M. King, #212, Mixed
Kristin Kyono, #203, Mixed
Catherine Mackey, #315, Mixed
Heidi McDowell, #212, Oil
Tessa Merrie, #212, Oil
Marcia Middleton, #304, Oil
Paul Morin, #318, Oil
Diane Olivier, #210, Drawing
Sonya Philip, #211, Fiber/Textile
Kevin Pincus, #210, Oil
Mr Rogers, #310, Mixed
Jeremy Sutton, #306, Mixed
Randy Titchenal, #304, Mixed
Cynthia Tom, #302, Acrylic
Kirsten Tradowsky, #212, Oil
Trish Tunney, #311, Photography

16 Art Explosion 17th Street Studios
2425 17th Street, Hampshire/Potrero

Jhina Alvarado, Oil
Megan Cutler, Acrylic
Aximillion Helga Duson, #148, Mixed
Natalie Hoogasian, #9, Photography
Howie Katz, Sculpture
Amelia Lewis
Ytaelena Lopez, #147, Printmaking
Beth Mullins, #5A, Mixed
Daniel Newman, #1A, Photography
Romulo Nisnisan Jr, # 145, Oil
Mark Powers, Drawing
Lucky Rapp, Mixed
Jeff Riley, #173, Oil
RUBYSPAM *, Mixed
Heike Seefeldt, #174, Acrylic
William Ulrich, #22, Drawing

17 Mauricia Gandara, 323 Potrero Avenue, 16th St./17th St., Mixed

18 Pernilla Persson, 323 Potrero Avenue, 16th St./17th St., Photography

19 Live Art Studios
151 Potrero Avenue, 15th St./Alameda

David Faulk
Michael Johnstone
Paul Knowles, Acrylic
Calixto Robles, Printmaking

20 Mylene Bernard, 375 Alabama Street, #495, 16th St./17th St., Jewelry

21 Workspace Limited
2150 Folsom Street, 17th St./18th St.

Jennifer Berkowitz, #7A, Oil
Natasha Dikareva, Sculpture
Miles Epstein, Furniture
Paul Glenn, Drawing
Delfina Piretti, #7b, Oil
Robert Reed, Acrylic
Kate Simmons, #14, Oil
Ann Simms, Acrylic
Sharon Steuer, #14a, Mixed
Tilroe Stevenson, Oil
Melissa Adams Urban
Excavations, #7B, Printmaking
John Zaklikowski, Mixed

22 Alex Greenburg, The SUB, 199 Capp St, 17th St./16th St., Photography

23 Studio Valencia
455A Valencia Street, 15th St./16th St.

Julia Glanville
Susan Hoff
Kai Lundgren Williams, Furniture
Peter Whitehead, Acrylic
Dana Zed, Glass

24 Red Brick Studio
2111 Mission Street, 3rd Floor, 17th St./18th St.

Shannon Abac, Ceramics
Alicia Guckenheimer-Harrell, Sculpture
Marnia Johnston, Ceramics
Jesse Lu Schreier, Glass/Ceramics

25 Leila Noorani, SoundSpace Studio, 2111 Mission Street, #303, 17th St./18th St., Acrylic

26 The Blue Studio
2111 Mission Street, 17th St./18th St.

Marie Bourget, Mixed
Geoffrey Campen, Mixed
Sidnea D'Amico, Acrylic
Robert Donald, Oil
Matthew Frederick, Oil
Mark Garrett, #13, Pastels
Ryan Grossman, Oil
Randall Heath, Mixed
Zinzi LeMond, Photography
Michael McConnell, #405, Drawing
Kate Nichols, Mixed
Ellen Rosenthal, Photography
Diana Ruiz, Mixed
Sadie Valeri, Oil
Marisa Vela, Oil

27 Alexandra Blum, 559 Guerrero Street, 17th St./18th St., Mixed

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We all want projects, work, housing, jobs, and an expanded tax base for the city — but many of us question the plan for Parkmerced.

EDITOR'S NOTES

By Tim Redmond
tredmond@sfbg.com

Does anybody else feel as if the whole country is collapsing around us?

I mean, I'm not an apocalypse fan. I remember when Ronald Reagan was elected and we had a big meeting at the Connecticut Citizen Action Group, where I worked, and a lot of people were on the edge of a serious panic, and Miles Rapoport, the staff director, told us all to calm down: the organization, and our work, would survive. So would the nation. I spent a lot of time with serious anarchist types in the 1980s, and I never really bought the notion that the revolution was at hand (alas, it was not) or that the United States of America and the corporate world order were on the brink of collapse (alas, again).

I think I slept through the great Harmonic Convergence on Aug. 17, 1987 ("the point at which the counterspin of history finally comes to a momentary halt") and I'm not terribly concerned about the Mayan calendar.

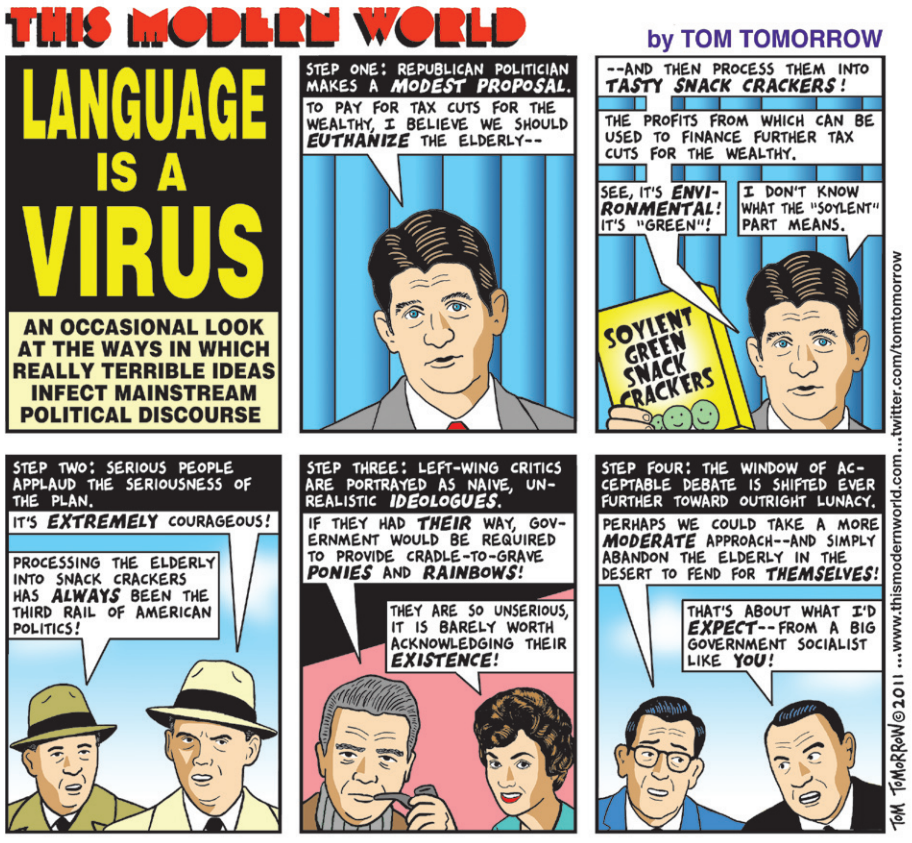
But I'm getting so I wake up every morning these days asking myself exactly what the fuck is going on.

I called my old friend Calvin Welch the other day to talk about the San Francisco mayor's race, and when I asked him how he was doing, he told me: "Well, other than the fact that America is falling apart everywhere I look, I'm doing fine." And he's not any crazier than me.

It's funny. I never felt as nervous about the state of the nation under Reagan or Bush as I'm feeling right now under President Obama. And I wasn't as scared about California when Arnold Schwarzenegger was governor as I am now, with Jerry Brown in charge.

Not that Reagan and Bush weren't far, far worse, or that Brown isn't doing a decent job, all thing considered. But when our folks are in charge — decent, smart folks

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No cuts-only pension deal

EDITORIAL Mayor Ed Lee has released a draft set of proposals for pension reform, and union leaders continue to meet with financier Warren Hellman to try to craft an alternative. Meanwhile, Public Defender Jeff Adachi is narrowing his options and appears ready to move forward to put his own plan on the ballot.

Everyone involved claims to be interested in a compromise, in some proposal that would reduce the city's burden of paying $350 million this year (and potentially as much as $790 million in five years) into the employee pension fund. We support that idea, too — there are plenty of necessary, progressive moves to fix the city's pension system and free up more cash for local programs.

Part two of a series.

But so far, none of the proposals on the table include any new revenue sources — which means, in effect, that the mayor, Hellman, and Adachi all want city workers to bear the entire brunt of the impact of a Wall Street-driven recession. The message: only city employees should share the pain; the wealthiest San Franciscans and biggest, richest businesses don't have to contribute at all.

It's a dangerous part of the tax mythology that Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter David Cay Johnston discusses on page 10. He notes that the argument in favor of tax cuts for the rich — that lower taxes will lead to more investment and thus more jobs — has been tested in this country for 30 years. And it hasn't worked.

Most San Franciscans probably realize that. Most city officials vote for Democrats, opposed the Bush-era tax cuts on the rich, and argue for more federal aid to cities. This is a progressive town.

But when it comes to something as fundamental as local economic policy — who pays for city services and who gets the benefits — the story becomes completely different.

The mayor and eight of the 11 supervisors are celebrating a broad-based tax cut as a way to create jobs in the Tenderloin and mid-Market (although the evidence that tax cuts don't create jobs is overwhelming). The mayor is looking at the equivalent of a cuts-only budget (although everyone at City Hall opposes the notion of a cuts-only budget in Sacramento). And while it's almost certain that some sort of pension reform will be on the November ballot, none of the players involved in the negotiations have openly taken what seems to us

CONTINUES ON PAGE 6 ››

It's not so easy building green

By Aaron Goodman

OPINION The Parkmerced project developers like to talk about how environmentally sound their plans are, but a harder look suggests otherwise.

At a March 29 hearing on the project, Green Pary member Eric Brooks presented graphic evidence of the environmental impacts of the destruction of the garden units and the landscape, and the proposed increase in parking on- site. As a transit-first city, it seems ludicrous to spend so much on below-grade parking. And regrading and replanting the entire site will allow toxins in the soil to become airborne.

Then there's the question of whether the site is really "blighted," as the developer claims — and whether so much housing needs to be torn down in the first place. Sup. Eric Mar questioned the issue of the deterioration of the existing units; he said he'd visited the site and noted that many units appear to be in fine shape.

I agree that the western side of town needs more density — but dumping that density disproportionately on one community seems to be a biased approach. Parkmerced is a renter community. Other areas dominated by homeowners seem to be off the table.

San Francisco should take a broader look at west-side zoning. That would include looking seriously at corridors with light-rail lines — Ocean Avenue, West Portal Avenue, Taraval Street, Geary Boulevard, Judah Street, and others — where some one-story buildings are far more deteriorated than the buildings at Parkmerced.

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EDITOR'S NOTES

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who, for all their flaws, have essentially decent ideas about politics and humanity — and they can't seem to make anything better ... I guess that's when I start to wonder if anyone can.

I'm not one to make sweeping generalizations (well, not usually), but in 2011, the country, and the state, are being run by a handful of bullies. They're wrecking the economy, wrecking the schools, wrecking the future — and nobody seems to be able to stand up to them. And even this diehard optimist is starting to wonder when it will ever end. SFBG

PENSION

CONT››

to be the only logical position:

Pension reform has to be linked to tax reform — a commercial rent tax, a progressive gross receipts tax, a city income tax, an increase in the Pacific Gas and Electric Co. franchise fee or something else that hits those who can afford to pay. Otherwise, we can't support it.

Even the city employee unions are being awfully quiet about the need for a deal that includes new taxes. They ought to be leading the charge here, telling everyone that a cuts-only pension deal isn't going to be acceptable. (The tax measures could hold until the November 2012 budget, when they'll be easier to pass — if there's a firm assurance that the mayor, Hellman, Adachi, the supervisors, and all the other players will support them.)

City employees are being asked to take what amount to pay cuts — which will reduce their purchasing power and have a depressing impact on the local economy. Taxing the wealthy (who spend a much smaller percentage of their income) has no such depressing impact. Those are hard, cold facts. They need to be part of the discussion.

Robert Reich, the former labor secretary who now teaches at the University of California, Berkeley, has an interesting essay on his blog April 9 that discusses Obama's budget capitulations. The president, he notes, "is losing the war of ideas because he won't tell the American public the truth: that we need more government spending now — not less — in order to get out of the gravitational pull of the Great Recession. That we got into the Great Recession because Wall Street went bonkers and government failed to do its job at regulating financial markets ... That the only ways to deal with the long-term budget problem is to demand that the rich pay their fair share of taxes.

"And that, at a deeper level, the increasingly lopsided distribution of income and wealth has robbed the vast working middle class of the purchasing power they need to keep the economy going at full capacity."

That's as true here as it is in Washington. And if city officials want progressive support for pension reform, they need to acknowledge it. SFBG

OP-ED

CONT››

City officials should look at alternatives that allow other sites to be upzoned or allow owners to build on side sites. This would lessen the effects on one community by sharing the growing pains of a city limited on three sides by water.

We all want the projects, work, housing, jobs, and an expanded tax base for the city. But many of us question whether the current plan for Parkmerced does justice environmentally and sustainably when it ignores infill and preservation-based alternatives that could create more jobs and a better long-term green solution.

I have submitted a proposal to the Planning Commission that shows how to improve transit linkages, how infill housing can be done, and how the 11 towers at Parkmerced can be redesigned (the initial concept was to design new, pencil-thin replacement towers and structurally-reinforced new buildings). I suggest that more infill housing can be built by removing parking garages throughout the site — which would lessen displacement and allow a significant density increase.

Assurances by the developer should not placate the city or the supervisors. If the supervisors lean toward approval, they need to be reminded of the transit, sustainability, and open-space concerns of the project to ensure that the design is changed either through revisions of portions or the whole to make more clear the concerns that the project has been greenwashed to promote the developer's interests. SFBG

Aaron Goodman is an architect and Bay Area native.

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Wilbur Storey, statement of the aims
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A•A•N

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Apr. 15 at the de Young



La Tania / Photograph by Adrian Arias

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The failed experiment

How misplaced faith in tax cuts and other economic myths are destroying the country

By David Cay Johnston
news@sfbg.com

For three decades we have conducted a massive economic experiment, testing a theory known as supply-side economics. The theory goes like this: Lower tax rates will encourage more investment, which in turn will mean more jobs and greater prosperity — so much so that tax revenues will go up, despite lower rates.

The late Milton Friedman, the libertarian economist who wanted to shut down public parks because he considered them socialism, promoted this strategy. Ronald Reagan embraced Friedman's ideas and made them into policy when he was elected president in 1980.

For the past decade, we have doubled down on this theory of supply-side economics with the tax cuts sponsored by President George W. Bush in 2001 and 2003, which President Barack Obama has agreed to continue for two years.

You would think that whether this grand experiment worked would be settled after three decades. You would think the practitioners of the dismal science of economics would look at their demand curves and the data on incomes and taxes and pronounce a verdict, the way Galileo and Copernicus did when they showed that geocentrism was a fantasy because the Earth revolves around the sun (known as heliocentrism). But economics is not like that. It is not like physics with its laws and arithmetic with its absolute values.

Tax policy is something the framers of the Constitution left to politics. And in politics, the facts often matter less then who has the biggest bullhorn.

The Mad Men who once ran campaigns featuring doctors extolling the health benefits of smoking are now busy marketing the dogma that tax cuts mean broad prosperity, no matter what the facts show.

As millions of Americans prepare to file their annual taxes, they do so in an environment of media-perpetuated tax myths. Here are a few points about taxes and the economy that you may not know, to consider as you prepare to file your taxes. (All figures are inflation adjusted.)

1. POOR AMERICANS *DO* PAY TAXES.

Gretchen Carlson, the Fox News host, said last year "47 percent of Americans don't pay any taxes." John McCain and Sarah Palin both said similar things during the 2008 campaign about the bottom half of Americans.

Ari Fleischer, the former Bush White House spokesman, once said "50 percent of the country gets benefits without paying for them."

Actually, they pay lots of taxes — just not lots of federal income taxes.

Data from the Tax Foundation shows that in 2008, the average income for the bottom half of taxpayers was $15,300.

This year the first $9,350 of income is exempt from taxes for singles and $18,700 for married couples, just slightly more than in 2008. That means millions of the poor do not make enough to owe income taxes.

But they still pay plenty of other taxes, including federal payroll taxes. Between gas taxes, sales taxes, utility taxes and other taxes, no one lives tax free in America.



ILLUSTRATION BY JUSTIN ROSE

When it comes to state and local taxes, the poor bear a heavier burden than the rich in every state except Vermont, the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy calculated from official data. In Alabama, for example, the burden on the poor is more than twice that of the top 1 percent. The one-fifth of Alabama families making less than $13,000 pay almost 11 percent of their income in state and local taxes, compared with less than 4 percent for those who make $229,000 or more.

2. THE WEALTHIEST AMERICANS *DON'T* CARRY THE BURDEN.

This is one of those oft-used canards. Senator Rand Paul, the tea party favorite from Kentucky, told David Letterman recently that "the wealthy do pay most of the taxes in this country."

The Internet is awash with statements that the top 1 percent pays, depending on the year, 38 percent or more than 40 percent of taxes.

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In 2008, the average income for the bottom half of taxpayers was $15,300.

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ALERTS

By Jackie Andrews
alert@sfbg.com

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13

Long Now lecture
This installment of the Long Now Foundation's monthly series called "Seminars About Long-term Thinking" features historian and archaeologist Ian Morris, who will talk about his book, *Why the West Rules — For Now*. Whole Earth Catalog founder Stewart Brand hosts this discussion about changes in global dominance, differences between civilizations, and the East/West distinction's shift toward insignificance.
7 p.m., $10
Marine's Memorial Center
609 Sutter, SF
www.longnow.org

THURSDAY, APRIL 14

Youth storytelling
Community Works presents "There's a Part of Me Gone," a night of exploring the impact of losing a loved one to incarceration. Students from Community Work's programs will share poetry and personal stories of their experiences of parental incarceration. Come and see these inspiring youth share their many accomplishments despite adversity.
6 p.m., free
California Institute of Integral Studies
Namaste Hall
1453 Mission, SF
www.wommunityworkswest.org

FRIDAY, APRIL 15

Benefit for Mexican info shop
Support the emerging anarchist info-shop in Mexico City, Furia de las Calles, by attending this screening of a film that was recently banned in Mexico. *Presumed Guilty* highlights the problems and injustices faced by two lawyers in their efforts to free Toño Zúñiga, who was wrongfully imprisoned. Afterward, stick around for a short documentary about the organizing efforts of anarchist collectives in Mexico.
7–9:30 p.m., Sliding scale donation
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www.espora.org/furia
www.akpress.org



LGBTQ youth talk back
Professor Cindy Cruz of UC Santa Cruz will share her recent work, an urban ethnography that compiles the stories and testimonies of 43 LGBTQ homeless youth between the ages of 14 and 21 who reside on the streets of one large U.S. metropolis. She argues for a new way of acknowledging resistance by these youth — and others like them — to the restrictions placed on their "queer homeless bodies" by society at large.
12–1:30 p.m., free
UC Berkeley Center for the Study of Social Change
Wildavsky Conference Room
2538 Channing Way, Berk.
www.issi.berkeley.edu

SATURDAY, APRIL 16

Earth Day of action and celebration
Help clean up the varied terrains and landscapes in and around Pacifica, including beaches, hillsides, bluffs, watersheds, and other public spaces and make a positive impact on this beautiful coastal environment. After a satisfying morning of work and community partnership, enjoy a celebration of your efforts with music, food, and family fun.
9 a.m.–3 p.m., free
Various Pacifica locations, see website to find a site and register
www.pacificabeachcoalition.org

SUNDAY, APRIL 17

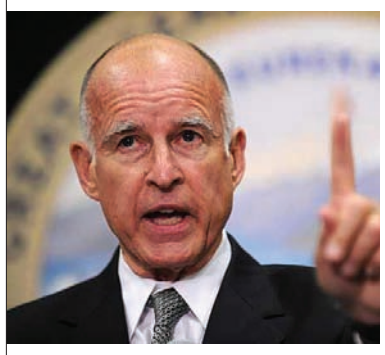
Fundraiser for Japan
More than 100 one-of-a-kind handmade tea bowls made by local ceramicists will be auctioned off to raise money for the people of Japan. Enjoy Japanese-inspired food and drinks as well as how-to demonstrations on tea, ikebana, sushi-making, and clay-hand building.
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We examine the Entertainment Commission's new nightclub security procedures, plus news from the Chauncey Bailey trial, anti sit-lie benches, more



NOISE
An interview with metal scribe Nikki Sixx on his latest (!) book, photos from Bomba Estereo's upcoming show at the Independent, American Idol musings, and more



PIXEL VISION
Lemi Ponifasio's Tempest at YBCA, a special SAVE KUSF film, and a Potrero Hill construction project on the cutting edge of green



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Taxes CONT.»

It's true that the top 1 percent of wage earners paid 38 percent of the federal income taxes in 2008 (the most recent year for which data is available). But people forget that the income tax is less than half of federal taxes and only one-fifth of taxes at all levels of government.

Social Security, Medicare, and unemployment insurance taxes (known as payroll taxes) are paid mostly by the bottom 90 percent of wage earners. That's because, once you reach $106,800 of income, you pay no more for Social Security, though the much smaller Medicare tax applies to all wages. Warren Buffett pays the exact same amount of Social Security taxes as someone who earns $106,800.

3. IN FACT, THE WEALTHY ARE PAYING *LESS* TAXES.

The Internal Revenue Service issues an annual report on the 400 highest income-tax payers. In 1961, there were 398 taxpayers who made $1 million or more, so I compared their income tax burdens from that year to 2007.

Despite skyrocketing incomes, the federal tax burden on the richest 400 has been slashed, thanks for a variety of loopholes, allowable deductions and other tools. The actual share of their income paid in taxes, according to the IRS, is 16.6 percent. Adding payroll taxes barely nudges that number.

Compare that to the vast majority of Americans, whose share of their income going to federal taxes increased from 13.1 percent in 1961 to 22.5 percent in 2007.

(By the way, during seven of the eight Bush years, the IRS report on the top 400 taxpayers was labeled a state secret, a policy that the Obama overturned almost instantly after his inauguration.)

4. MANY OF THE VERY RICHEST PAY NO CURRENT INCOME TAXES AT ALL.

John Paulson, the most successful hedge fund manager of all, bet against the mortgage market one year and then bet with Glenn Beck in the gold market the next. Paulson made himself $9 billion in fees in just two years. His current tax bill on that $9 billion? Zero.

Congress lets hedge fund managers earn all they can now and pay their taxes years from now.

In 2007, Congress debated whether hedge fund managers should pay the top tax rate that applies to wages, bonuses and other compensation for their labors, which is 35 percent. That tax rate starts at about $300,000 of taxable income; not even pocket change to Paulson, but almost 12 years of gross pay to the median-wage worker.

The Republicans and a key Democrat, Sen. Charles Schumer of New York, fought to keep the tax rate on hedge fund managers at 15 percent, arguing that the profits from hedge funds should be considered capital gains, not ordinary income, which got a lot of attention in the news.

What the news media missed is that hedge fund managers don't even pay 15 percent. At least, not currently. So long as they leave their money, known as "carried interest," in the hedge fund, their taxes are deferred. They only pay taxes when they cash out, which could be decades from now for younger managers. How do these hedge fund managers get money in the meantime? By borrowing against the carried interest, often at absurdly low rates — currently about 2 percent.

Lots of other people live tax-free, too. I have Donald Trump's tax records for four years early in his career. He paid no taxes for two of those years. Big real-estate investors enjoy tax-free living under a 1993 law President Clinton signed. It lets "professional" real-estate investors use paper losses like depreciation on their buildings against any cash income, even if they end up with negative incomes like Trump.

Frank and Jamie McCourt, who own the Los Angeles Dodgers, have not paid any income taxes since at least 2004, their divorce case revealed. Yet they spent $45 million one year alone. How? They just borrowed against Dodger ticket revenue and other assets. To the IRS, they look like paupers.

In Wisconsin, Terrence Wall, who unsuccessfully sought the Republican nomination for U.S. Senate in 2010, paid no income taxes on as much as $14 million of recent income, his disclosure forms showed. Asked about his living tax-free while working people pay taxes, he had a simple response: everyone should pay less.



5. AND (SURPRISE!) SINCE REAGAN , ONLY THE WEALTHY HAVE GAINED SIGNIFICANT INCOME.

The Heritage Foundation, the Cato Institute, and similar conservative marketing organizations tell us relentlessly that lower tax rates will make us all better off.

"When tax rates are reduced, the economy's growth rate improves and living standards increase," according to Daniel J. Mitchell, an economist at Heritage until he joined Cato. He says that supply-side economics is "the simple notion that lower tax rates will boost work, saving, investment, and entrepreneurship."

When Reagan was elected president, the marginal tax rate for income was 70 percent. He cut it to 50 percent and then 28 percent starting in 1987. It was raised by George H.W. Bush and Clinton and then cut by George W. Bush. The top rate is now 35 percent.

Since 1980, when President Reagan won election promising prosperity through tax cuts, the average income of the vast majority — the bottom 90 percent of Americans — has increased a meager $303, or 1 percent. Put another way, for each dollar people in the vast majority made in 1980, in 2008 their income was up to $1.01.

Those at the top did better. The top 1 percent's average income more than doubled to $1.1 million, according to an analysis of tax data by economists Thomas Piketty and Emmanuel Saez. The really rich, the top 10th of 1 percent, each enjoyed almost $4 in 2008 for each dollar in 1980.

The top 300,000 Americans now enjoy almost as much income as the bottom 150 million, the data show.

6. WHEN IT COMES TO CORPORATIONS, THE STORY IS MUCH THE SAME – LESS TAXES.

Corporate profits in 2008, the latest year for which data is available, were $1.8 billion, up almost 12 percent from $1.6 billion in 2000. Yet even though corporate tax rates have not been cut, corporate income-tax revenues fell to $230 billion from $249 billion — an 8 percent decline, thanks to a number of loopholes. The official 2010 profit numbers are not added up and released by the government, but the amount paid in corporate taxes is: in 2010 they fell further, to $191 billion — a decline of more than 23 percent compared with 2000.

7. SOME CORPORATE TAX BREAKS DESTROY JOBS.

Despite all the noise that America has the world's second highest corporate tax rate, the actual taxes paid by corporations are falling because of the growing number of loopholes and companies shifting profits to tax havens like the Cayman Islands.

And right now America's corporations are sitting on close to $2 trillion in cash that is not being used to build factories, create jobs or anything else, but act as an insurance policy for managers unwilling to take the risk of actually building the businesses they are paid so well to run. That cash hoard, by the way, works out to nearly $13,000 per tax-paying household.

A corporate tax rate that is too low actually destroys jobs. That's because a higher tax rate encourages businesses (who don't want to pay taxes) to keep the profits in the business and reinvest, rather than pull them out as profits and have to pay high taxes.

The 2004 American Jobs Creation Act, which passed with bipartisan support, allowed more than 800 companies to bring profits that were untaxed but overseas back to the United States. Instead of paying the usual 35 percent tax, the companies paid just 5.25 percent.

The companies said bringing the money home — "repatriating" it, they called it — would mean lots of jobs. Sen. John Ensign, the Nevada Republican, put the figure at 660,000 new jobs.

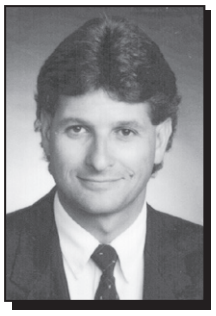
Pfizer, the drug company, was the biggest beneficiary. It brought home $37 billion, saving $11 billion in taxes. Almost immediately it started firing people. Since the law took effect, it has let 40,000 workers go. In all, it appears that at least 100,000 jobs were destroyed.

Now Congressional Republicans and some Democrats are gearing up again to pass another tax holiday, promoting a new Jobs Creation Act. It would affect 10 times as much money as the 2004 law.

8. REPUBLICANS LIKE TAXES TOO.

President Reagan signed into law 11 tax increases, targeted at people down the income ladder. His administration and the Washington press corps called the increases "revenue enhancers." Among other things, Reagan hiked Social Security taxes so high that by the end of 2008, the

CONTINUES ON PAGE 12 »



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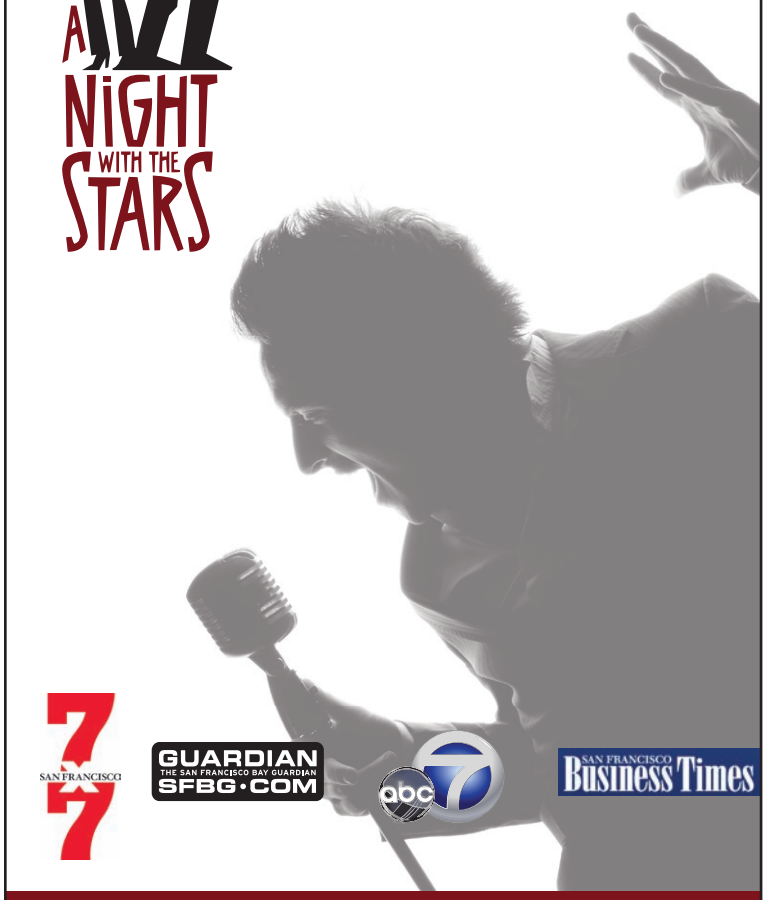


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Taxes CONT.

government had collected more than $2 trillion in surplus tax.

George W. Bush signed a tax increase, too, in 2006, despite his written ironclad pledge to never raise taxes on anyone. It raised taxes on teenagers by requiring kids up to age 17, who earned money, to pay taxes at their parents' tax rate, which would almost always be higher than the rate they would otherwise pay. It was a story that ran buried inside The New York Times one Sunday, but nowhere else.

In fact, thanks to Republicans, one in three Americans will pay higher taxes this year than they did last year.

First, some history. In 2009, President Obama pushed his own tax cut—for the working class. He persuaded Congress to enact the Making Work Pay Tax Credit. Over the two years 2009 and 2010, it saved single workers up to $800 and married heterosexual couples up to $1,600, even if only one spouse worked. The top 5 percent or so of taxpayers were denied this tax break.

The Obama administration called it "the biggest middle-class tax cut" ever. Yet last December the Republicans, poised to regain control of the House of Representatives, killed Obama's Making Work Pay Credit while extending the Bush tax cuts for two more years — a policy Obama agreed to.

By doing so, Congressional Republican leaders increased taxes on a third of Americans, virtually all of them the working poor, this year.

As a result, of the 155 million households in the tax system, 51 million will pay an average of $129 more this year. That is $6.6 billion in higher taxes for the working poor, the nonpartisan Tax Policy Center estimated.

In addition, the Republicans changed the rate of workers' FICA contributions, which finances half of Social Security. The result:

If you are single and make less than $20,000, or married and less than $40,000, you lose under this plan.

But the top 5 percent, people who make more than $106,800, will save $2,136 ($4,272 for two-career couples).

9. OTHER COUNTRIES DO IT BETTER.

We measure our economic progress, and our elected leaders debate tax policy, in terms of a crude measure known as gross domestic product. The way the official statistics are put together, each dollar spent buying solar energy equipment counts the same as each dollar spent investigating murders.

We do not give any measure of value to time spent rearing children or growing our own vegetables or to time off for leisure and community service.

And we do not measure the economic damage done by shocks, such as losing a job, which means not only loss of income and depletion of savings, but loss of health insurance, which a Harvard Medical School study found results in 45,000 unnecessary deaths each year

Compare this to Germany, one of many countries with a smarter tax system and smarter spending policies.

Germans work less, make more per hour and get much better parental leave than Americans, many of whom get no fringe benefits such as health care, pensions or even a retirement savings plan. By many measures the vast majority live better in Germany than in America.

To achieve this, single German workers on average pay 52 percent of their income in taxes. Americans average 30 percent, according to the Organizations for Economic Cooperation and Development.

At first blush, the German tax burden seems horrendous. But in Germany (as well as Britain, France, Scandinavia, Canada, Australia, and Japan), tax-supported institutions provide many of the things Americans pay for with after-tax dollars. Buying wholesale rather than retail saves money.

A proper comparison would take the 30 percent average tax on American workers and add their out-of-pocket spending on health care, college tuition, and fees for services and compare that with taxes that the average German pays. Add it all up and the combination of tax and personal spending is roughly equal in both countries, but with a large risk of catastrophic loss in America, and a tiny risk in Germany.

Americans take on $85 billion of debt each year for higher education, while college is financed by taxes in Germany and tuition is cheap to free in other modern countries. While soaring medical costs are a key reason that since 1980 bankruptcy in America has increased 15 times faster than population growth, no one in Germany or the rest of the modern world goes broke because of accident or illness.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

David Cay Johnston is a columnist for tax.com and teaches the tax, property, and regulatory law of the ancient world at Syracuse University College of Law and Whitman School of Management. He has also been called the "de facto chief tax enforcement officer of the United States" because his reporting in The New York Times shut down many tax dodges and schemes, just two of them valued by Congress at $260 billion.

Johnston received a 2001 Pulitzer Prize for exposing tax loopholes and inequities. He wrote two bestsellers on taxes, Perfectly Legal and Free Lunch. Later this year David Cay Johnston will be out with a new book, *The Fine Print*, revealing how big business, with help from politicians, abuses plain English to rob you blind.

And child poverty in America is the highest among modern countries — almost twice the rate in Germany, which is close to the average of modern countries.

On the corporate tax side, the Germans encourage reinvestment at home and the outsourcing of low-value work, like auto assembly, and German rules tightly control accounting so that profits earned at home cannot be made to appear as profits earned in tax havens.

Adopting the German system is not the answer for America. But crafting a tax system that benefits the vast majority, reduces risks, provides universal health care and focuses on diplomacy rather than militarism abroad (and at home) would be a lot smarter than what we have now.

Here is a question to ask yourself: We started down this road with Reagan's election in 1980 and upped the ante in this century with George W. Bush.

How long does it take to conclude that a policy has failed to fulfill its promises? And as you think of that, keep in mind George Washington. When he fell ill his doctors followed the common wisdom of the era. They cut him and bled him to remove bad blood. As Washington's condition grew worse, they bled him more. And like the mantra of tax cuts for the rich, they kept applying the same treatment until they killed him.

Luckily we don't bleed the sick anymore, but we are bleeding our government to death. SFBG



On April 5, the Board of Supervisors voted to appoint Dorothy Liu (right) to the San Francisco Ethics Commission instead of Allen Grossman (left). Progressives were supporting Grossman as a reform-minded candidate.

Seeking a watchdog's watchdog

Supervisors reject Ethics Commission candidate who has agitated for reform

By Rebecca Bowe
rebeccab@sfbg.com

When cash pumps through the guts of city politics, the Ethics Commission is charged with keeping track of it all to help members of the public follow the money. But what happens when the public loses faith in the ethics of the Ethics Commission?

In the run-up to a hotly contested mayoral race, in a city marked by rough-and-tumble politics influenced by moneyed power brokers, the function of this local-government watchdog agency is especially critical — and to hear some critics tell it, the Ethics Commission needs reform if it is to perform as an effective safeguard against corruption.

So it was hardly surprising that an April 5 discussion at the San Francisco Board of Supervisors meeting about whom to appoint to the Ethics Commission featured a low-level tug-of-war with some potentially high-level implications.

Sup. Eric Mar proposed that the board consider Allen Grossman for the seat. An octogenarian government watchdog unaffiliated with any political party, Grossman has gone so far as to file a successful lawsuit against the Ethics Commission for not following its own public-disclosure rules. As a potential appointee, he was widely viewed as reform-minded, following in the footsteps of others who have been purged from the body in recent years.

"Open government and good government work together, hand in hand," Grossman told members of the board's Rules Committee several weeks prior, interlacing his fingers for emphasis.

Grossman won the backing of Sups. John Avalos and Ross Mirkarimi. But Board President David Chiu spoke against the idea, throwing his support instead behind Dorothy Liu, an attorney and professional colleague of his through the Asian American Bar Association. The Rules Committee, chaired by Sup. Jane Kim and filled out by Sups. Sean Elsbernd and Mark Farrell, also turned down Grossman in favor of Liu.

"She's extremely hard-working and does her homework," Chiu later told the Guardian. He also saw it as a plus that Liu was not a political insider: "I think we need an individual on the Ethics Commission who will be impartial," he said, adding that he'd prefer "someone who has not been involved in the rough-and-tumble of San Francisco politics." Sup. Carmen Chu echoed Chiu's comments during the meeting, saying she thought Liu would be an ideal candidate because she did not seem to have an agenda.

Mirkarimi and Avalos, on the other hand, said they were looking for a candidate who did possess a vision for strengthening the role of the agency as a watchdog. "I think our Ethics Commission and the department, as it stands, needs all the help it can get," Mirkarimi said during the meeting. "I think having people who are well-seasoned with an understanding in the law of ethics and sunshine is something we should be looking for. Mr. Grossman has exhibited that well over the years in trying to do everything he possibly can to advance the cause in a nonpartisan way of making sure that we have a very strong Ethics Commission."

Mar's motion to consider Grossman was shot down on an 8-3 vote with Mirkarimi, Mar, and Avalos dissenting; Liu then won the commission appointment on a 10-1 vote, with Avalos dissenting.

Until recently, the Board of Supervisors seat on the Ethics Commission was held by Eileen Hansen, a progressive who had called for political reform under Mayor Willie Brown's administration prior to being named to the post. When she was being considered for the commission, Hansen recalled, then-Sup. Michela Alioto-Pier raised an objection. "[She] thought the perfect person would be somebody who ... would come essentially as a clean slate," Hansen remembered. "Because I had been involved in organizing campaigns and had run for office, that was deemed too political."

Yet Hansen viewed her familiarity with the system as an asset that helped her serve as an effective watchdog against corruption. During her six-year tenure, Hansen often cast lone dissenting votes against decisions she believed were weakening ethical standards. She told the Guardian she'd tried floating remedies for situations she viewed as inappropriate, only to have them summarily ignored, a role similar to that of former Ethics Commission member and staffer Joe Lynn.

In one case, Hansen recalled, she became concerned about a planning commissioner who also directed a nonprofit. To raise money, her organization held fundraisers that were ostensibly attended and funded by the very same developers and lobbyists who appeared before her at the Planning Commission. Yet Hansen said she was unable to persuade the other commissioners or staff to call for an investigation.

A more recent Ethics Commission vote underscores the same tension. On March 14, the commission voted unanimously to waive a pair of ethics regulations to allow a mayoral staff member to become executive director of the America's Cup Organizing Committee (ACOC). Composed of highly influential business figures including at least two billionaire investors, ACOC is tasked with securing corporate donations for the America's Cup to offset city costs of hosting the race.

Kyri McClellan, project manager with the Mayor's Office of Economic and Workforce Development, helped craft a memorandum of understanding with ACOC regarding its fundraising obligations to the city. In her new job, without skipping a beat, she'll interface with the city on behalf of ACOC. The rules that were waived for her benefit are meant to prevent city officials from holding undue influence over their former coworkers after leaving public service, and to prevent city staffers from accepting money from city contractors right after departing from city employment.

"If I had been there, there would have been at least one vote against that waiver," said Hansen, whose term on the commission ended before this vote. "We have this law in place for a reason. By continuing to provide waivers ... we create a situation where the public will not trust the Ethics Commission as a watchdog."

Hansen said she was scouting for a new commissioner who would carry on with her work. "I was looking for and trying to recruit a visionary — someone who could really be a reformer," she said. "We're almost in a position now where we need a watchdog over the watchdog." She said she saw Grossman as the right fit.

Other observers, such as CitiReport blogger Larry Bush — an investigative reporter who called for the creation of the Ethics Commission in San Francisco in the early 1990s — questioned whether Liu was the best choice after hearing her statements at the March 17 Rules Committee hearing. Liu did not come out strongly in favor of televising Ethics Commission meetings, which has long been a sticking point for open-government advocates.

"I absolutely support televising the Ethics Commission, I think it's really important," Kim noted when we asked her about this. She added that she would have supported Oliver Luby — a former Ethics Commission staff member and whistleblower who was ultimately ousted from the job — if he'd applied.

Kim noted that an initial concern she'd had in seeking an ethics commissioner was whether the person would vote to allow Mayor Lee to resume his job as city administrator after serving out his term as interim mayor, a key decision that the commission was scheduled to consider April 11.

Once she was advised that it would be inappropriate to ask which way they would vote when conducting candidate interviews, Kim said she withheld her question — and still didn't know Liu's or Grossman's position at the time she spoke with the Guardian. "I think it's very appropriate for him to get his job back," Kim noted. "That vote is very important to me."

That vote drew closer scrutiny, however, after Ethics Commission staff recommended that the exemption that would be built into the law for Lee's benefit should be expanded to include appointed members of the Board of Supervisors. "This new proposal would convert a targeted, narrow exemption to deal with a special case into the 'Politician Job Protection Act' and could open the door to all kinds of unintended consequences," charged Jon Golinger of San Franciscans for Clean Government.

Meanwhile, Luby seemed disheartened by the board's selection of Liu for the Ethics Commission. He was looking to Grossman to fill Hansen's shoes as the commission's reformer — a role previously held by Lynn, Luby's good friend and mentor who died last year.

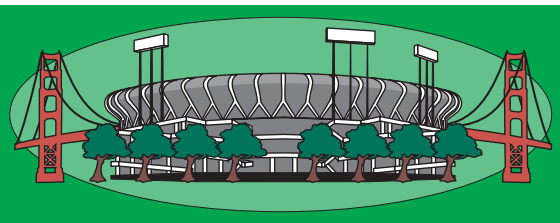
He lamented, "This will mark the first time in over 10 years to have an Ethics Commission without someone who has past experience advocating for good government." SFBG

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Fair and unbalanced

The tale of two trials: Barry Bonds' perjury and Chauncey Bailey's murder

By Bob Butler
news@sfbg.com

Since March 21, reporters representing the cream of American journalism have been camped out in the Bay Area covering two high-profile trials.

In an Oakland courtroom, two men are accused of being involved in three murders, including that of Chauncey Bailey, a journalist who was writing a story about Your Black Muslim Bakery. In San Francisco, baseball home run king Barry Bonds is accused of telling a federal grand jury that he never knowingly took steroids.

Apart from the fact that both trials are taking place simultaneously and all the defendants are African American, there is a disparity in how these cases are being treated by the media, both local and national.

The Bailey trial is being covered by fewer than a dozen reporters from mostly local media: the Oakland Tribune, the San Francisco Chronicle, KTVU, American Urban Radio Networks, CBS Radio, NPR, the Guardian, the Associated Press, ABC 7 News, several websites, and bloggers. Some are there every day, others are not. To be fair, there was more media coverage for the first few days of the trial.

According to KCBS reporter Doug Sovern, who is covering the Bonds trial, the press list includes "KCBS, KGO Radio (some of the time), KQED (occasionally), Westwood One, Channels 2 (KTVU), 4, 5, 7, 11, Comcast Sports Net, ESPN, CNN, Bloomberg, the Associated Press, Agency France Presse, the Chronicle (a reporter and a columnist every day; sometimes two columnists,) the New York Times, the Wall Street Journal, the Bay Area News Group (including the San Jose Mercury News), Reuters, the Los Angeles Times, Sports Illustrated, a few other bloggers, stringers, and people I don't recognize," writes Sovern in an e-mail. "I would say that adds up to about 30, plus still photographers. Probably close to 40 in all, plus THREE sketch artists!"

Media experts say the Bailey trial is far more significant when you look at how both cases affect society.

"Obviously Barry Bonds is one of the greatest baseball players of all time," said Louis Freedberg, senior reporter for California Watch, one of the units at the Center for Investigative Reporting in Berkeley. "You add to that the celebrity factor in a society that is completely obsessed with celebrities, regardless if they do good or bad, I can see how it's easy to define this (Bailey) as a local story and shunt it aside."

But the problem is that society depends on journalists to provide truth and information and to hold those in power accountable. There are many countries where journalists are arrested and/or killed for writing stories that someone doesn't like.

An independent press was a top priority for America's founding fathers, right behind establishing the military.

"Establishing a free press was viewed as fundamental," said Freedberg. "I don't think they talked about baseball players at that time, so when you have a journalist being assassinated, that strikes at the core of what this society stands for — or should stand for."

That belief was so strong after Bailey was killed that journalists, including the author, came together to form the Chauncey Bailey Project to finish Bailey's work and make sure that everyone who was involved in the assassination was brought to justice.

"Some media are covering this deeply — the ones that covered it here — so I don't want to make a blanket condemnation. But, yeah, I think the Bailey trial has much broader symbolism and importance to the United States than the trial of Barry Bonds," said Robert Rosenthal, executive director of the Center for Investigative Reporting and executive editor of the Chauncey Bailey Project.

Another issue that has caused concern in the African American community is how boys and men of color are portrayed in the news media. "Usually when you see this demographic in the press, they are accused of crime, victims of crime, or playing sports," said Dori Maynard, president of the Maynard Institute for Journalism Education.

In the Bonds case, the media are hitting two out of three — a great average for baseball, but a Bonds conviction will have virtually no impact on American democracy.

The media should cover the Bonds trial, but it should not forget about the Bailey trial, which will still be going when the Bonds trial ends.

If those who are on trial for killing Bailey are indeed guilty but are allowed to go free, it will send a message that journalists — the people who keep society informed and hold those in power accountable — are fair game. SFBG

This story first appeared at www.maynardije.org, the website of the Maynard Institute, a member of the Chauncey Bailey Project, of which the Guardian is also a member.

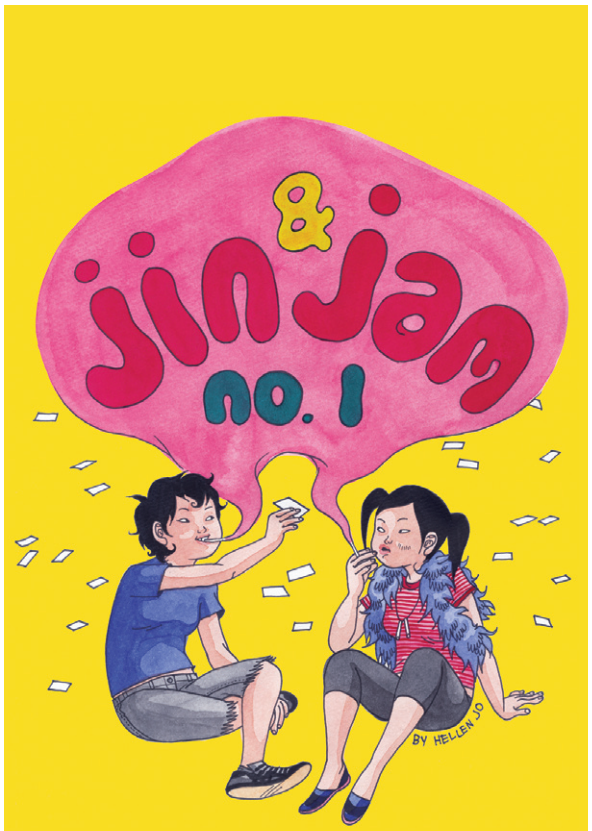
LATEST TRIAL NEWS: JUDGE DENIES DEFENSE MOTION AFTER REPORTER RECEIVES DEATH THREAT

On April 11, a defense attorney in the Chauncey Bailey murder trial asked the judge to ban jurors from reading newspapers or using the Internet for the duration of the trial after the Bay Area News Group and the Chauncey Bailey Project reported that a journalist had received a death threat while reporting a story related to the now defunct Your Black Muslim Bakery.

Gary Sirbu, who is representing codefendant Antoine Mackey, made the request as the trial resumed Monday, April 11. Articles about the threat were published Saturday, April 9 on the front page of Bay Area News Group publications, including the Oakland Tribune.

Judge Thomas Reardon asked jurors if they had read any news stories over the weekend about the telephone threat made to reporter Josh Richman. By a show of hands, jurors indicated they had not read the articles.

Reardon denied Sirbu's request, saying he did not want to make such an order. But the judge again cautioned jurors to avoid any news coverage about the case or anything related to Your Black Muslim Bakery. **(Thomas Peele)**







APIs on the rise: Asian American artists — here, the work of Bay local Hellen Jo and DC Comics sketch master Bernard Chang — draw some of the most exciting stories in the comic book stratosphere. | COURTESY OF SUPERGIRL COPYRIGHT DC COMICS

Behind the panel

Asian American comic artists top the industry — off the page

By Caitlin Donohue
caitlin@sfbg.com

CAREERS AND ED Graphic novelist Gene Yang has a theory about how the comic industry came to be home to more Asian American artists than probably any other North American media form. "American comics have always been an outsider's medium," he wrote in a recent e-mail correspondence with the Guardian. "Most of the American comic book icons — Superman, Batman, the Hulk, Captain America — were created by poor Jewish boys living in the ghettos of New York. All you needed was a pencil, some paper, and a tiny bit of talent. Asian Americans took advantage of the same dynamic."

Suppositions aside, Yang's point is this: these days, Asian Americans are at the top of the comic book game. Yang has published many comic titles that creatively explore what it was like for him and his siblings growing up in the Bay Area (he was born in Alameda). *American Born Chinese* pits a high schooler against a monkey king from Chinese folklore who compels him to face his discomfort with his family's heritage. *Level Up* looks at a video game fanatic's transition to med school, a journey undertaken by Yang's brother in real life.

Yang is by no means the only Asian American excelling in the comic industry. Jim Lee, a Korean American who was named copublisher of DC Comics last year, is often regarded as the modern era's quintessential comic artist. And many of the genre's biggest names — including the man behind DC's *Supergirl* series; Bernard Chang, creator of the syndicated strip *Liberty Meadows* Frank Cho; and *Human Target* illustrator Cliff Chiang (all interviewed via e-mail for this article) — are first- or second-generation Asian Americans.

"If you were to ask any comic book fan who their favorite artists are, odds are there will be an Asian American creator — or two, or three, if not four — on that list," Chang says.

This wasn't always the case. When most of today's comic book artists were growing up, there were few stories being told about Asian Americans in popular entertainment. Chang moved to Miami from Taiwan as a child, and apart from comic books sent to him by relatives overseas, saw very little in the mass media that could relate to his own experience. "For the most part, you had the Bruce Lee kung fu movies that played on the secondary television stations on the weekends," he says.

"Everything seemed to be about people in Asia or recent immigrants," remembers American-born Chiang. "I didn't go out of my way to seek out those stories. What I did respond to was art and animation created by Asians in the form of cartoons like *Speed Racer* or *Battle of the Planets*."

He wasn't the only one who turned to cartoons as a child. Yang fondly remembers the commonalities he found in superhero comics, even going as far as attributing his and other Asian American boys' attraction to Superman to a subconscious recognition of a kindred soul. It was a connection he copped from Jeff Yang, editor of *Secret Identities: The Asian American Superhero Anthology*, a collection that assembled some of today's top comic art talent in creating an illustrated shadow history of the United States.

To wit: "Here's a guy with two identities, one American and the other foreign — Kryptonian. He has two last names, one American — Clark — and the other foreign with a hyphen in the middle, Kal-El. He came to America at a young age. He's black haired, mild-mannered, and wears glasses. All of his superpowers derive from the fact that he's a foreigner."

And there's the art form itself, Yang continues: words and pictures side by side, typically avoided in Western art save in children's books and advertising but embraced in Asian tradition. "You could have the best brush-painted image in the world," Yang says, "but if the poem paired with it sucked, the whole piece sucked."

THE SAGA OF RYAN CHOI

But if so many of the genre's artists are Asian American, why are so few of its protagonists? Despite the prevalence of minority fans at comic conventions and the ever-diversifying profile of the people who create comics, their characters — with the important exception of those in manga — are mainly Caucasian.

And the big publishing houses in comics appear to sticking with this monotone. For a time, DC experimented with retiring its big name heroes, replacing them — in the words of Yang —

CONTINUES ON PAGE 17 ››

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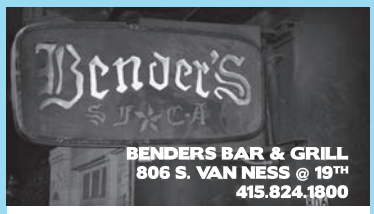


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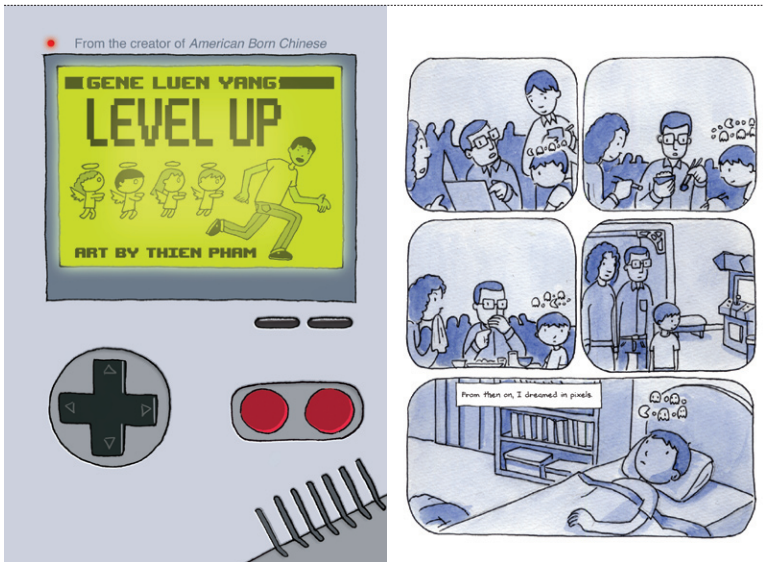
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Educating Minds and Hearts to Change The World



Gene Yang's graphic novels address common themes in growing up Asian American. His latest release, *Level Up*, looks at familial expectations and how they shapes our lives.

Comics CONT»

with "younger, hipper, often ethnic versions." As an example, he offers the saga of the Silver Surfer, originally a white guy named Ray Palmer. Palmer was made to disappear mysteriously, and in the logic of the comic universe, was replaced by his Korean American protégé, Ryan Choi.

But "the young ones just weren't selling," says Yang. Ryan Choi got a blade to the chest and Ray Palmer got his job back.

Most of the widely-known artists we spoke to think diversifying the superhero world wasn't something that could happen overnight. Most fans, they said, are attracted to comics out of a sense of nostalgia that doesn't hold up well with change, especially one as drastic as switching up a character's race.

"Supergirl is an established character with years of history and story lines," Chang says. "I can't simply come in and change her to be an Asian girl, that wouldn't make sense. But I make an effort to draw new supporting characters with different ethnicities, not just Asians but blacks, Latinos, and others."

Cho thinks the reason Asians have thrived in the comics industry is the genre's relative anonymity. "You have to understand there's a strong and subtle undercurrent of racism in America. But comics are color-blind. It's the ideas, art, and stories that matter — not how you look or who you are." And he wants to keep it that way. "I don't want to read any Asian-centric stories, or any black stories. I just want to read a good story."

"I DEMAND SOME REPRESENTATION!"

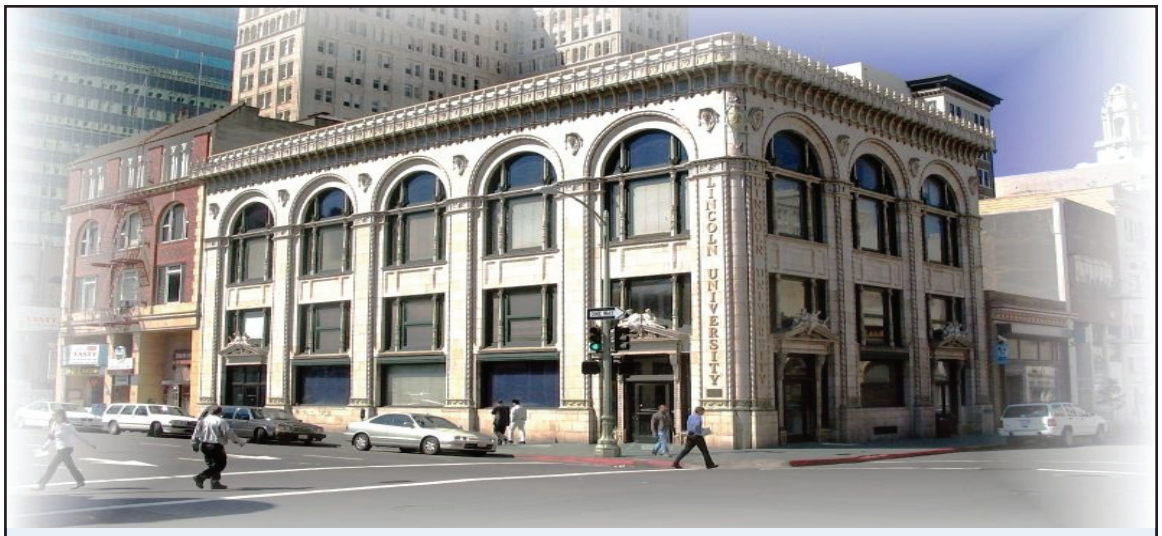
Of course, not everyone shares his views. Hellen Jo is a SF comic artist who draws because she considers comics "a beautiful narrative medium with boundless potential."

"Despite the 'enlightened' age we live in, I still can't find many Asian American narratives that resonate with me personally," Jo says. So she makes her own gorgeous comic strips and books that tell stories that fall far outside the standard comic canon, distinct even from the genre's occasional tries at depicting Asian women.

"We don't often see Asian American women shown as brash, plain, ugly, dirty, and without ambition — and it certainly isn't because those types of API [Asian Pacific Islander] women don't exist," Jo says. "I identify as a gross, stupid, ugly Asian American girl and I demand some representation!"

But she's not waiting for Marvel to release *Gross, Stupid, Ugly API No. 1*. Jo is taking the bull by the horns — just like Yang, who draws his own works, and the many mainstream artists we spoke with who contribute to books like *Secret Identities* and have side projects that speak more directly to the API experience. Sure, these books don't sell as much as the blockbuster *Batman* and *Avengers* titles — but at least they exist now.

As do more and more Asian Americans and other minorities among the genre's most talented creators. It's hard not to believe that Ryan Choi will rise again, in his own series this time, with a decidedly unambitious API girl at his side. **SFBG**



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New school

The Bay's most innovative degrees show the way to the future

By Emily Appelbaum
culture@sfbg.com

CAREERS AND ED You don't need a degree, or even the patience to sift through US Census Bureau reports on educational attainment, to know that each year this nation graduates more students from institutions of higher ed — public and private universities, colleges, junior colleges, and professional schools — than it did the year before. San Francisco is second only to Seattle in the number of papered persons running around, and statistics say that they, in turn, are more likely to raise little educational overachievers of their own. With this glut of matriculation on the horizon, it's hard not to ponder the degree programs of the future: an associate's in astrotourism? A bachelor's of biosynthetic anatomy? A PhD of P4TA? (That's "preparing for the apocalypse" for the cyber-stupid.) Hard to say. But before we get carried away, here's a sampling of programs fit for a brave new world that can be found in the here and now.

SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC DESIGN AND INSTALLATION

California South Bay University sits smack-dab in the center of Silicon Valley, so it's no surprise that the offerings are high-tech. The larger California zeitgeist seems to be rolling in on the San Francisco fog, though, and interesting patterns — like a master's of science in green energy technology — have emerged. But the university really takes advantage of the Santa Clara Valley sunshine (and billowing demand for sustainable energy) with its Interstate Renewable Energy Council-accredited certificate program in solar photovoltaics, the science of connecting the two. If a full-fledged degree isn't in your forecast, the school offers two 40-hour courses that might be a perfect fit.
California South Bay University, 1107 North Fair Oaks, Sunnyvale. (408) 400-9008, www.csbu.us

INTERACTION DESIGN

Degrees in video game design and Web programming are old hat, but California College of the Arts takes the idea of the user interface beyond the screen, and plugs it back into real life. The school's focus on design that users can interact with includes classes on platforms from cell phone to sculpture, game console to gallery, preparing students to "create meaningful and innovative designed experiences in the realms of work, lifestyle, and play." Vague? Yes. Useful? Possibly. That three-dimensional holographic surround-sound computer interface that Tom Cruise uses in *Minority Report*? Get your virtual-reality gloves out 'cause it's on its way ...
California College of the Arts, 1111 Eighth St., SF. 1-800-477-1278 www.cca.edu

LANDSCAPE HORTICULTURE

Horticulture goes high-tech at Merritt College. The school claims to have all the most up-to-date equipment in the field, and with 5,000 square feet of computerized greenhouses, a 5,000-square-foot lath house, a floral and drafting lab, and disciplines such as "turf management," we doubt anyone would argue. And to think, we were still relying on dirt, sun, and water to do our growing.
Merritt College, 12500 Campus Drive, Oakl. (510) 531-4911, www.merritt.edu

BOOK ART AND CREATIVE WRITING

This master's program allows students to develop as writers and visual artists simultaneously, and encourages a "deep exploration of the book form in both content and materiality." The interplay of form and content is not a new academic trope, but given that physical codices may soon be obsolete, taking a moment to ponder the book as object might not be a bad idea — lest future generations wonder why we wrote all over our toilet paper. Literary artifacts? Worth checking out!
Mills College, 5000 MacArthur Blvd., Oakl. (510) 430-2255, www.mills.edu

GREEN AND SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL

Tourists looking for a tequila sunrise and a tan may not realize that the pool they're baking beside used to be a jungle. Each year, sensitive wildlife areas the world over are steamrolled under hotel strips. At the same time, environmentally-conscious tourism has become a booming industry. Given the facts, a student could do worse than this City College Business School program. The quickie certificate takes just a year — not a bad thing, considering ecotourism's popularity and the rapidly decreasing availability of stuff left to tour.
City College of San Francisco, Ocean Campus, 50 Phelan, SF. (415) 239-300, www.ccsf.edu

HIV/STI PREVENTION

With a focus on risk reduction counseling, data collection, and outreach strategies, this one-year certificate in HIV/STI prevention studies from City College's health education department just seems like a really good plan to bring a brighter future to all.
City College of San Francisco, Ocean Campus, 50 Phelan, SF. (415) 239-3000, www.ccsf.edu



California College of the Arts' interaction design program gets students ready to run in a *Minority Report*-like future — or at least make a kick-ass app. | PHOTO COURTESY OF CCA

FOLKLORE

Preparing for the future is all about remembering the past ... or so might say a folklorist with a master's or doctorate from UC Berkeley. An interdisciplinary degree from the department of anthropology, folkloristics (that's the term) provide a new spin on the studies of ethnicity, nationality, gender, and sexuality, as well as the chance to revive vernacular tales, customs, beliefs, and plain ol' stories from days gone by.
UC Berkeley, 318 Sproul Hall No. 5900, Berk. (510) 642-7405, www.berkeley.edu

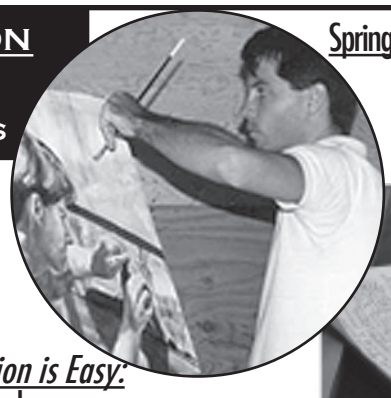
RAZA STUDIES

That "melting pot" we all learned about in grade school is on the boil — bubbling with a range of issues both sweet and spicy, and some we haven't even tasted yet. As our country continues to diversify, equity, social justice, and community empowerment will only become more important. San Francisco State University's B.A. in raza studies seeks to offer future leaders the knowledge, skills, and social consciousness necessary to navigate an increasingly complex social landscape.
San Francisco State University, 1600 Holloway Ave., SF. (415) 338-1111, www.sfsu.edu

TAXATION

If everything else on this list is just a bit too futuristic and far out, Golden Gate University offers one of the country's oldest and best-respected graduate programs in taxation. Looking for the ultimate in job security? This is your best bet since the San Francisco College of Mortuary Sciences closed in 2002. Death ... and taxes.
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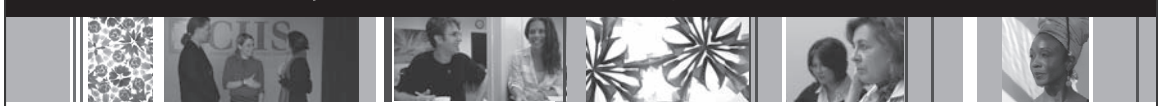


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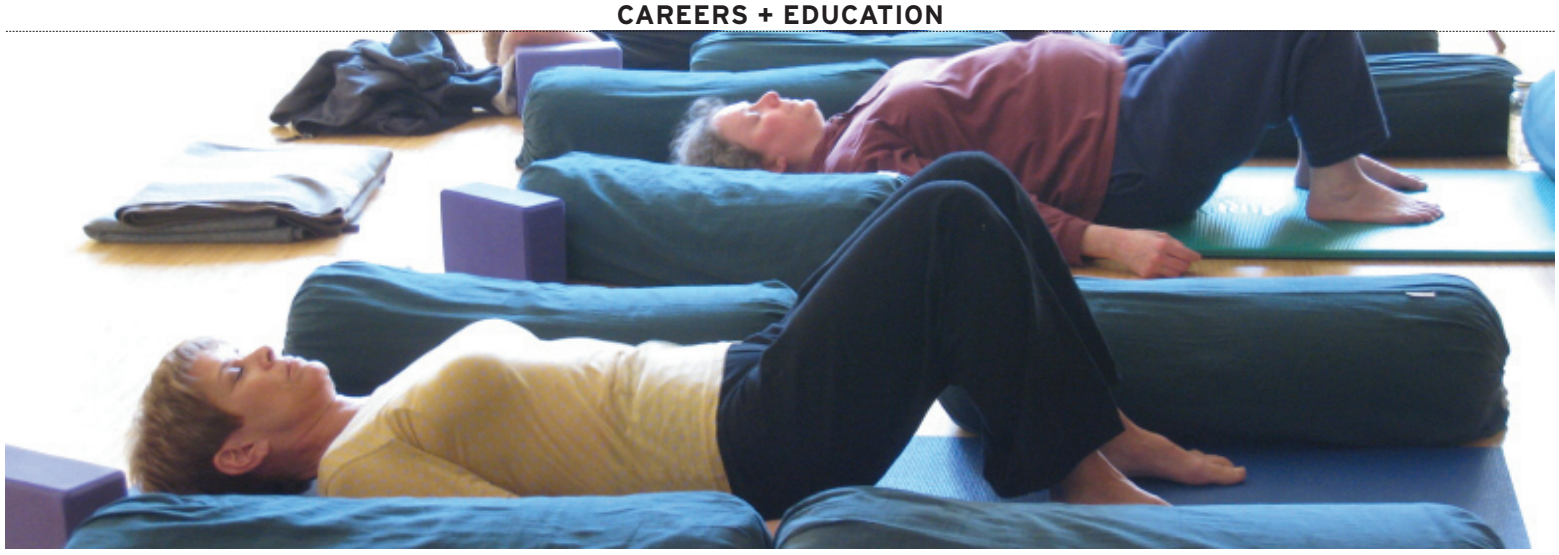
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Support group: restorative yoga classes feature asanas that nurture. | PHOTO COURTESY OF SAN FRANCISCO INTEGRAL YOGA INSTITUTE

Heady

From restorative yoga to dream astrology, classes to expand your mind

By Hannah Tepper
culture@sfbg.com

CAREERS AND ED "Just to let you know, this class is different than other yoga classes," warns the receptionist at the San Francisco Integral Yoga Institute. It's Monday night and I've just shown up at the institute to try my first restorative yoga class. "You roll around on pillows ..." he continues.

I get it — restorative yoga is not your typical barrage of sun salutations and yogic pretzel bends — so I nod reassuringly and head up the flights of stairs to the top floor of the institute's Victorian-style mansion-cum-yoga-palace, emerging in the dark, candle-lit room where the class will be held. There are high wood ceilings and plenty of space on the carpeted floor, where a pile of pillows wait for each student.

Our instructor will be Divya Nanda, a guest teacher who has been affiliated with the institute for more than 40 years. Wearing silky orange garments from head to toe, she radiates a calming, peaceful presence.

Here we go. Let's just get it out there. I'm not a yoga person. If I happen to take a break from Internet-beer time long enough to exercise, I prefer to do it alone with my iPod rather than in a room full of strangers.

But I'm a stressed-out soul, generally speaking, and restorative yoga's smooth, centering movements sound appealing. This form of yoga is geared toward relaxation and uses slow-moving techniques to give students a sense of peacefulness, spiritual fulfillment, and mind-body connection — all things yours truly is 100 percent lacking. Most yoga studios in the city offer some form of restorative class, which can be perfect for those suffering from injuries or just in need of a little slow-paced nurturing.

"Restorative yoga is based in the philosophy of the whole yoga practice, which is to be peaceful," Nanda says. "Peace is within you, so we go within."

Within we go, starting with "oms," "hari oms," and simple warm-ups — downward dog pose interspersed with concentrated breathing exercises and stretches. All the while, Nanda circulates throughout the room, adjusting our positions and making sure that we're completely relaxed and comfortable.

During one warm-up that involved sitting with our knees tucked under us, Nanda looked over at me and said, "Hannah, you might want to do this one in the cross-legged position, I don't want you to hurt your ankles." I was shocked. How did she know my ankles were aching — x-ray yogi vision?

After the deep breathing, we move on to poses that entailed lying in super-comfortable, unconventional asanas. They make me feel like a sleepy baby. Designed to place minimal pressure on joints, they include splaying out our legs and arms, every part of our bodies supported by soft pillows.

Along the way, Nanda shares soothing thoughts: "The future is a mystery. The past is history. What we have is now, the golden present." "Beyond the thinking mind there is a great peacefulness," and so on. We end the class with guided meditation and this Sanskrit chant: "From the unreal to the real, from the darkness to the light, from our fears to the knowledge of our immortal natures."

Leaving Nanda's world was bittersweet: I'm sad to go, realizing I've never given myself a sanctioned stretch of time to nurture my reflective side. But emerging from the institute, walking back out into the gentle buzz of Dolores Street, I feel so centered that I can almost hear my body whispering to me. Was that an "om shanti," relaxed core of mine? I can't be sure — but I know it won't be my last time in restorative yoga. Below, a brief list of ways to learn to nurture yourself in the Bay.

RESTORATIVE YOGA

Mondays 7:30 p.m. –9 p.m., $9 for first class, $12 for subsequent classes, Integral Yoga Institute, 770 Dolores, SF. www.integralyogasf.org

INTERPRETING DREAMS WITH HORARY ASTROLOGY

You may not have heard of the San Francisco Astrological Society, but as far as Bay Area star sign enthusiasts are concerned, it's a big deal. This year it will be hosting astrology-focused lectures on topics like "The Cycle of Saturn," "2012 and Beyond." If you're interested in what your dreams can tell you about the future, you'll have to check out this upcoming talk. It promises to teach about the basic techniques needed to unlock your dreams for clues on what's to come using ancient Greek dream interpretation methods and horary astrology, a sect of astrology based on creating a horoscope for the exact moment in which a question is asked.

May 26, 7:30 p.m., $7 for members, $12 for nonmembers. Building C, Fort Mason Center, SF., www.sfastrologicalsociety.com

SENSUAL TOUCH AND DEEPER CONNECTION (IN AND OUT OF THE BEDROOM)

If you're not big on touching people, then this class is probably not for you — although it might have the power to change your mind on the subject. This one-time workshop with somatic therapist and intimacy coach Shara Ogin teaches you how to take physical contact to the next level. From intimacy to sex to sensual massage, Ogin plans to show students how to make each experience more intimate and cosmically close.

April 19, 6–8 p.m., $40/pair advance, $45 at door. Good Vibrations, 1620 Polk, SF. www.goodvibes.com

EVOLVING WESTERN HERBAL TRADITIONS

Medical herbalist, new age crusader, and self-proclaimed member of the herbal renaissance, David Hoffman teaches this class focusing on the history of herbalism in the United States and the world. The workshop ranges from discussions about herbs in science and medicine to ways herbs are used in the our country and the changing role of botanical medicine in a modern global context. Rolling papers not included.

Aug. 23, 10 a.m.–5 p.m., $100. Charlotte Maxwell Complimentary Clinic, 2601 Mission, SF. www.ohlonecenter.org SFBG

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At a UC Berkeley Regents meeting in 2010, student protesters in military costumes joined a packed house to discuss plans to move class offerings online. | PHOTO BY JULIE ENG, CITY ON A HILL PRESS

The online-learning challenge

Is it about making money — or making education free?

By Emily Appelbaum and Asaf Shalev
culture@sfbg.com

CAREERS AND ED Mixing, mashing, chatting, tweeting: This is how the University of California envisions the future of learning for what it calls a new breed of students. Also on the syllabus? Podcasting, vodcasting, blogging, and Skype.

Last week, UC was awarded a $750,000 Next Generation Learning Challenges grant, moving it one step closer to a curriculum composed of words that barely existed a decade ago. But some fear — with good reason — that online education will become a low-cost, high-return alternative to traditional instruction. And the students will be the losers.

UC's Online Instruction Pilot Program grew out of recommendations to explore online learning discussed by the UC Commission on the Future over the past two years. This spring, a subcommittee of faculty and administrators selected 29 courses to be developed over the next two years.

The pilot program is a long-term initiative to evaluate and ultimately increase the role of online education as a regular part of the UC curriculum — a chance to respond, according to the program's website, to a "transformation" in the way students learn.

The commission promotes online learning as a boon without trade-offs, a way of answering questions of accessibility, efficiency, and, ultimately, costs — and is not shy about outlining the relationship between the three. Chartered to help wiggle UC out of a "vise of rising costs and drastically reduced resources," the commission is proposing sweeping changes to California's public university system.

ALL BUT THE KEG PARTY

UC envisions a greater number of students served and increased diversity, "from Kentucky to Kuala Lampur," according to Law School Dean Chris Edley, cochair of the commission's Education and Curriculum Working Group.

Edley, one of the most enthusiastic proponents of digital learning, initially referred to online education as an 11th UC campus, promising it would offer an equivalent college experience — minus only the "keg party."

Critics were quick to condemn the plan as overblown excitement. Concerned undergraduates and skeptical faculty raised questions about the quality of online learning. Angry graduate student instructors (understandably) balked at Edley's grandiose vision of a cybercampus where "squadrons of GSIs" will serve on the "frontline of online contact" with undergraduates.

Political science professor Wendy Brown is one of the leading critics. "Personal engagement with students is crucial," she told us in a phone interview. "Real teachers don't just teach subject matter. You have to know students and where their experience and level of engagement is. I don't want them just to come out with content — I want them to come out as thinkers ... have a new way to analyze the world."

Brown said she believes that acclimating to the intellectual culture of a university — especially important in the first year — can't be achieved online. Yet first-year courses are exactly where administrators are looking to channel online efforts.

Administrators hope to relieve pressure on overcrowded gateway math and science courses, as well as freshman reading and composition. As many as 40 percent of first-year students test out of their first semester of reading and composition, indicating that the students remaining are those most in need of attention. Even so, a generous smattering of general chemistry, intro calculus, and reading and composition classes like Humanities 1A are among the pilot courses moving forward.

Craig Evans, professor of mathematics and chair of the course committee for calculus, echoes Brown's concerns. "I don't think it's impossible to make this work, but I think it would be very, very difficult," he said. "Part of what we do as teachers is applied psychology, things like checking in with students and keeping up morale, in addition to teaching classical mathematics. It's hard to see how to convey that in an online course."

Robert Anderson, faculty representative to the Board of Regents and professor of economics and mathematics, agreed that there is "something important about being on campus for four years, rubbing shoulders with students and faculty."

And when short-term goals — taking pressure off overcrowded introductory courses — are met, what comes next?

The academic senate approved the pilot program on the condition that the necessary funding — as much as $7 million — come from outside sources. With the exception of the $750,000 NGLF grant, that money hasn't materialized. The university has borrowed money from internal sources; half of that will be directed toward infrastructure development, according to Anderson.

With money-saving rhetoric underlining every stage of the program's development and millions to be invested in online infrastructure, how will UC officials avoid the temptation to simply use online learning as a revenue source—regardless of what academic benefits pilot program researchers find?

CASH COWS

The answer is: they won't.

In a post on the Berkeley Blog last summer, Edley attempted to allay fears that an online program would eliminate campus learning by assuring that future online pupils would be "new, tuition-paying, UC-eligible students we otherwise wouldn't have the room or resources to serve. And any net revenue would be plowed back into supporting the on-campus program." In this model, off-campus students would be cash cows milked for the additional revenue they could produce.

Though the committee has delayed visions of an entirely online degree since then, crucial questions regarding a long-term trajectory remain: Would online students pay the same price? Would they be accepted exclusively for online matriculation? Would their degrees be identical?

Nobody knows, but already the pilot program is relying on projected revenue from off-campus students to help recoup some of the borrowed $7 million, according to Anderson.

Keith Williams, Edley's cochair on the commission's education and curriculum working group, confirmed that UC is planning to offer newly developed classes on a per-credit basis to students enrolled at UC and others.

According to Williams, these new courses will offer full course credit — and the full price tag. Pricing was made consistent with brick-and-mortar courses, Williams explained, to avoid causing UC students to make a tough decision: either pay full price for an on campus course or save money by taking a less desirable online course.

And yes, conveniently, offering the courses at full price does generate revenue to be reinvested. (Williams balked at the phrase "skimmed off the top.")

Now that the pilot program is underway, administrators are treading more lightly around its money-making intentions. But for a reminder of the project's origins, one need only look at the commission's recommendation to up enrollment quotas for nonresident students — a recommendation slated to be met next year.

The commission's final report explicitly calculates the amount of money ($12,000) that can be generated for each Californian

FREE ONLINE LEARNING: SOME TIPS

Some of the nation's — and the world's — top universities now make classes available free on the web. You won't get credit or a degree — but you can, in effect, audit classes on a wide range of subjects.

UC Berkeley has an official YouTube channel (www.youtube.com/ucberkeley). Catch up with students taking classes this semester on astrophysics, computer science, or the "Dynamics of Romantic Core Values in East Asian Premodern Literature." One of the top rated and most viewed videos is a class on gravity and satellites. One viewer frankly commented, "Thank you for making me less dumb."

It's easy enough to hop over to other coast if you are curious about what Ivy League classes look like — and Yale's online access (www.oyc.yale.edu) offers more than just video. You even have the syllabus as well as the actual homework assignments.

Popular among Yale undergraduates is a philosophy class titled "Death." You can also check out an advanced Literary Theory class with on lecture focusing on Queer Theory and Gender Performativity.

Universities all over the world are plugging in to the open education movement. At the University of Southern Queensland in Australia (www.ocw.usq.edu.au), the selection is slimmer, but who can pass up the opportunity to take "Object Oriented Programming in C++." Seriously, though, how about "Creating Interactive Media"? **(Appelbaum and Shalev)**

replaced with a nonresident student, stating "each 1 percent increase in nonresident students would generate almost $1 million" — a dubious maneuver at a time when the university claims it must expand online education to meet the shortages of space for its own residents.

The culture betrayed by this vision of UC education is clear — one in which educational models are constructed according to business practices.

Despite the pilot program's rhetoric of innovation and breakthrough, it's not the first to fuse Internet with education. Brown is quick to note that despite her criticism of the pilot program "[she] is not a Luddite." She described to us how the faculty is increasingly making use of online educational aids.

Many professors choose to broadcast their lectures online, allowing students — and anyone else for that matter — to virtually peek in on a lecture, either live or with a delay of hours or days.

Currently, more than 40 UC Berkeley lecture halls are fitted for video and/or audio recording. Thousands of transmissions, from biology to history, have been uploaded to iTunes and YouTube (see sidebar).

Although webcasts are highly popular with students — and students are undoubtedly the main priority for the program — people are tuning in from all continents, according to Benjamin Hubbard, who runs the webcast program.

For Hubbard, webcasts "[broaden] the window of access to all the scholarly activity on campus. We are fortunate in that we are public university, so first and foremost we have a mission of community service and making this content freely and publicly available matches this mission."

THE PUBLIC OPTION

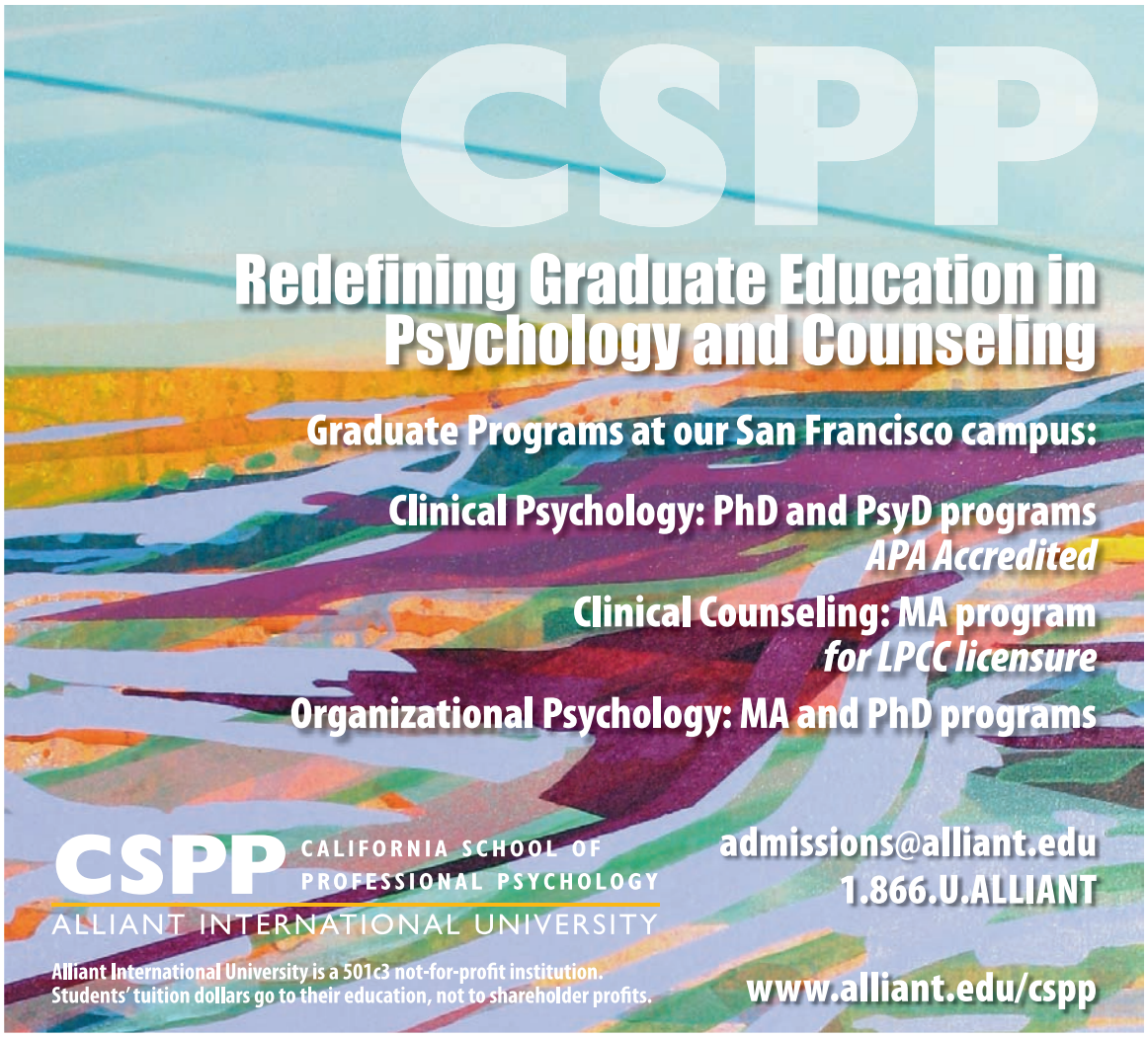
Recognizing the enormous challenges of decreased accessibility and increasing cost, a growing consortium of educators and researchers are building momentum and developing a vision for a truly public online educational program.

Lisa Petrides, president and founder of the Institute for the Study of Knowledge Management in Education, calls herself a "public education fanatic." She told us that the instead of using online teaching as a money-maker, schools can adopt a principled, egalitarian approach.

Petrides is a signatory of the Capetown Declaration, a manifesto for the open education movement. The declaration calls for collaboration that cuts across institutional lines; for the use and promotion of free educational resources; and for policy support for open education.

"You start to have this pedagogical collaborative community that can use resources in this way, changing how we teach and how we learn," she said. To take analogy for computer software, Petrides says her movement is akin to the open source movement.

Now *there's* an innovative approach to online education — with its eyes on the future, not its pocket. SFBG





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Plates of haloumi cheese and lentils with rice and cucumber yogurt make for a brilliant feast at Mazzat — and bill that'll Lebanese you smiling. | GUARDIAN PHOTO BY RORY MCNAMARA

A Beirut festival

By Paul Reidinger
paulr@sfbg.com

DINE Mazzat used to be a deli, and some of the badges and incidents of deli-hood remain — mostly the glass cases, full of delectables, that run deep into the restaurant like a half-wall. The neighborhood setting is unusual. The old Central Freeway used to run almost directly overhead as a kind of hellish roof of concrete, but it's gone now, leaving — across the street — a large gap with an improvised garden: an open wound that's slowly healing. The setting reminds me of Prenzlauer Berg, an area of what was once East Berlin, with weedy emptiness and the memory of damage just steps away from gleaming renewal.

Mazzat (which opened in December in the old Apollo Market & Deli space) does gleam. With its rather formal look — of polished dark wood and taupe paint, inverted tulip lamps, white linen tablecloths, and a handsome wooden wine rack at the rear of the narrow dining room — it belongs in spirit to the renewed heart of Hayes Valley rather than to the whitewater river of traffic surging along Fell Street past the restaurant's front door. It also implies much higher prices than those you actually find, with the majority of items — the menu is Lebanese — under $10, and in many cases well under $10. You can enjoy a brilliant feast at Mazzat and still find yourself looking at surprisingly reasonable number at the end.

The menu includes quite a few choices you would expect to find throughout the eastern Mediterranean, including dolma, tabbouleh, and baba ghanoush. The hummus ($5), served in a slanted oval bowl, was wonderful, with its potentially overbearing constituents, including garlic, lemon, and tahini (which can be quite bitter) held in a proper balance. On the side came warm pita triangles in a bottomless basket. Even better was the yogurt-cucumber dish known in Greece as tzatziki ($5); it tasted as if it had been made with whole-milk yogurt, which has a velvety quality its more gelatinous low-fat cousins can't match.

The Lebanese salad fattoush ($8) is something of an analog to the Italian bread salad panzanella, in that each is a way of making use of stale bread. In fattoush, the bread is pita, and at Mazzat, the toasted pita chunks were tossed with shreds of romaine, chopped red pepper, and bits of cucumber. It was as if a panzanella had collided with a caesar salad and the result given a tangy-sweet dressing.

Also slightly sweet were the meat pies ($6 for four), pastry rosettes filled with chopped beef that had been simmered with onion and tomato. I would have liked the filling a little better if it had been a bit less sweet and more savory (onion has surprising sweetening power, almost like carrot, when cooked enough), but it was easy to balance the sweetness with a hit of tzatziki.

On the savory-verging-on-salty part of the spectrum, there is the halloumi cheese ($4), presented as a quartet of fried chips with a slight softness and rubberiness inside. Halloumi is a Cypriot cheese, typically made with blend of cow and sheep milk, and this halloumi did indeed seem like a well-trained feta, with some of the pungency and saltiness nicely muted by the cow milk. If you like saganaki (the Greek cheese that gets doused with brandy and set on fire tableside) and can live with less theatrics, you'll like the halloumi.

There was a divergence of views on the chicken shawerma wrap ($8), a burrito-sized cylinder of lavash stuffed with chicken that smelled and tasted of clove. The party of the second part didn't care for the clove, and I understood the objection — clove has a strong personality — without joining it. The discordant association, for me, had to do with Christmas, since clove, with its penetrating perfume, is a key ingredient of mulled cider, a holiday favorite. On the other hand, the presence of clove meant that the wrap (with its flatbread skin nicely pressed and warm like a freshly ironed shirt) would never be mistaken for a burrito.

The desserts were of a proportion I would call ideal. They were bigger than petits fours, but several degrees of magnitude smaller than what you usually find at restaurants — and pay $9 or $10 for now. Nammura ($2.50), a kind of semolina cake that looked like a rectangle of corn bread, was nicely moist and just sweet enough to qualify as a dessert, although it did look lonely and naked on its plate. Almost anything would have helped: a scattering of berries, a sifting of powdered sugar, a splash of liqueur — maybe some arak, the Lebanese answer to pastis? More complete was the baklava ($3), intense with honey and fresh chopped pistachio, which also lent a lovely sheen of pale green, a hint of spring inside Mazzat as in the garden across the way. SFBG

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By L.E. Leone
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CHEAP EATS My flight was cancelled so I did my taxes. I tried to do my taxes. What I did, I wrote to Coach and said, "Let's play catch. My flight was cancelled." She was at work.

I went to get my nails done. After, I saw Sockywonk sitting on the step of her soap store, so I sat down next to her.

"I'm sorry I'm a bad friend sometimes," I said. "Here." And I handed her a small bag I'd been carrying around. Inside: the sexy nightie she lent me to go roller skating in last fall.

It was decided that I wasn't a bad friend.

I went in the store and bought two tubes of Chapstick and deodorant. Then it was time to throw the football with Coach, but something had come up, for her, so I went home and unpacked my suitcase, then repacked it, only with Chapstick. The deodorant, I decided, smelled worse than me, so I filed it in my medicine cabinet.

Can I tell you how hungry I was? And I had eaten my refrigerator the evening before, in anticipation of two weeks away. Coach was in Dolores Park with cookies and crazy people, and kept texting me to say be patient, we would throw, we would eat. "Wait for it. Wait for it," she said.

I have blood sugar issues, everyone knows. One thing, it gets harder for me to make decisions, the farther away I get from my last meal. So when, having waited for it, my time came, I was not as prepared as I should have been. I was, in fact, unprepared.

In other words, I needed Coach to step up, and, being Coach, she did! With flair and brilliance. She grabbed the first rubber-band-stuck paper flyer menu from the first gate we saw and said, before even looking at it: "Let's go here."

So we did. We walked to Market and 15th streets, to Bombay. The menu had a picture of an elephant parading a banner between its trunk and tail: "Best Indian Food in the Castro!"

I don't know about that. I had eaten there once before but didn't have much to say. I think they dogged me on the spice factor. This time I ordered better, in part because I was with a goddamn vegetarian, which shows to go you. So instead of ordering chicken tikka masala or something predictable, I got chana palak, which is spinach and garbanzo beans (two things I love) and, in honor of the sad fact that I wasn't in New Orleans, a bunch of fried stuff. Pakoras, samosas ...

All of which were just dandy, drenched in the tabletop hot sauce and green stuff. But what stole the show for me was my own personal li'l bowl of chicken and lemon soup that I tacked on by way of having some meat in my day, and therefore not going completely crazy.

This soup, it was fantastic! It was spicy, creamy, and wonderful, and it was called mulligatawny — which in itself is cause for celebration.

I was all set to love the best Indian food in the Castro this time around, except that something happened to ruin everything. And it wasn't that we were fighting, which we were, kind of. I forget why. I remember I showed Coach my fingernails, how shortly manicured they were. She wants to help me be a better lesbian, see, as surely as I want to help her be a better outside linebacker. "Trim your fingernails," she's always telling me. "Lesbians don't like long fingernails."

I think I understand why, but then (not that I ever said this out loud, or ever *would*, it's such a fucked-up thing to say:) most lesbians don't have as many fingers as I do. Ba-dum-bum ...

Um, but that wasn't it, either.

The paper menu had a coupon for one free entrée, but we tripped up so much over the fine print ($25 minimum, one coupon per table, dine-in only and between 5 and 10:30 p.m.) that we neglected to consider the bigger print, the point: that to get one free entrée (of lesser value, not to exceed $8), you had to of course order *two* entrees. They dazzle you with so much fine print you miss the point. Tricky, innit? SFBG

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THURSDAY
APRIL 14

MUSIC

Two Door Cinema Club
Featured as a "You Oughta Know" artist on VH1, Northern Ireland's Two Door Cinema Club is an indie electropop trio comprised of Alex Trimble (lead vocals/guitar), Sam Halliday (vocals/guitar), and Kevin Baird (bass/vocals). (What of the drummer, you ask? Sometimes human, sometimes a computer.) The band's *Tourist History* recently picked up the 2010 Choice Music Prize for Irish album of the year, suggesting its making good on the promise shown by opening for indie rock greats like Foals, Phoenix, and Delphic. If you're one of the working schmucks who can't take the time off for Coachella, catch Two Door Cinema Club before it goes to Indio. **(Jen Verzosa)**

With Globes and Work Drugs
8 p.m., $20
Fillmore
1850 Geary, SF
(415) 346-6000
www.livenation.com

EVENT

"Charles Phoenix Retro Slide Show"
Oddball Americana guru Charles Phoenix has explored and celebrated the best in kitschy, cool, kooky artifacts and history for many years now, having written several books on mid-20th century deep-fried pop culture, fashion, lifestyles, and more. The author of tomes such as *Southern California In The '50s* and *Americana The Beautiful* brings his hilarious slide show and talk to the city, set to roast the imagery found in some of the thousands of vintage Kodachrome slides has collected at flea markets over the years. Be sure to keep an eye out for some familiar places and things — Phoenix has promised to include a bevy of vintage San Francisco slides for this entertaining ode to the odd and unique. **(Sean McCourt)**

8 p.m., $25
Roxie Theater
3117 16th St., SF
(415) 863-1087
www.roxie.com

PERFORMANCE

Our Daily Bread
Carb load on this: in a collaboration between Amara Tabor-Smith's Deep Waters Dance Theater, director Ellen Sebastian Chang, and visual artist Lauren Elder, *Our Daily Bread* delves into the folklore and stories surrounding food traditions. The socially conscious hybrid theater experience draws from a family gumbo tradition, examining how industrialized agriculture, fast food culture, and our global food crisis affect current food practices. In addition, CounterPulse resident artist Tabor-Smith also considers who is missing from the sustainable food movement. With red beans and rice on the mind, expect to fill your plate with individual food legacies and questions regarding your own relationship to food. You are what you eat. **(Julie Potter)**

Thurs/14–Sun/17, 8 p.m., $18–$22
CounterPulse
1310 Mission, SF
(415) 626-2060
www.counterpulse.org

EVENT

Nikki Sixx
Known not only for his fiery stage presence and key songwriting contributions as bassist for Mötley Crüe, Nikki Sixx also gained a notorious reputation for his off-stage antics, particularly his legendary appetite for drugs and debauchery. Sober now for several years, Sixx detailed many of these early escapades and horrors in his 2007 book *The Heroin Diaries*. He returns — just before a major summer tour, which includes a June stop in SF — with the follow-up, *This Is Gonna Hurt: Music, Photography, and Life through the Distorted Lens of Nikki Sixx*, a look at his post-addiction life that finds him a successful author, radio host, and of course, still rocking the stage with the Crüe. **(McCourt)**

6 p.m., $29.99 (includes book)
Book Passage
One Ferry Building, SF
(415) 835-1020
www.bookpassage.com

FRIDAY
APRIL 15

DANCE

Alonzo King's Lines Ballet
The longer I watch Alonzo King's Lines Ballet, the more this choreographer manages to surprise me. What intrigues is not so much his language — intricate, idiosyncratic, and demanding — or even the way he uses it on his dancers. But there is a vision, a philosophy behind his work, that we get glimpses of in every new piece. That's what good dance is supposed to do. King also goes out of his way to find collaborators who can envelop his choreography in the mantle of new contexts. Of course, it helps that these other-than-dance contributions, in particular, are often spectacular on their own. But to get Mickey Hart, who actually is philosophically pretty close to King, create a score for Lines Ballet is a coup even for a choreographer with a growing international reputation. Architect Christopher Haas, who worked on the de Young Museum, created the set. **(Rita Felciano)**

Through April 24
Fri.–Sat., 8 p.m.;
April 20–21, 7:30 p.m.;
April 24, 5 p.m., $25–$65
Yerba Buena Center for the Arts
Novellus Theater
700 Howard, SF
(415) 978-2787
www.linesballet.org

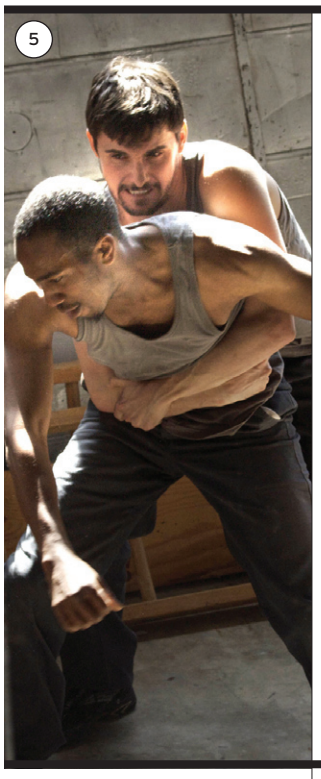
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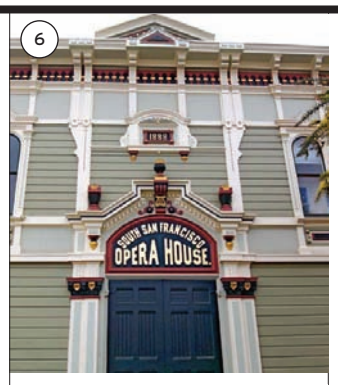
The Residents
Hang on to your eyeballs, San Francisco's most enigmatic art-rock collective the Residents will storm the stage at Bimbo's in support of its for-no-particular-reason, ghost-story themed "Traveling Light" tour. The calculatedly anonymous group (currently a trio), as well known for its elaborately costumed stage personae and mixed-media presentations as for its deconstructed lyrics and dystopian musical baditude, is fast approaching its fourth decade. But don't expect a set stuffed merely with humdrum nostalgia. Actually, don't expecting any particular thing, because defying expectations is what the Residents do best. Word is the group will be recording the proceedings in three (possibly four) dimensions, so wearing your very best top hat to the show might not be a bad idea. **(Nicole Gluckstern)**

Fri/15–Sat/16, 9 p.m., $30
Bimbo's
1025 Columbus, SF
(415) 474-0365
www.bimbos365club.com

PERFORMANCE

Zaccho Dance Theatre
With a title — *The Monkey and the Devil* — taken from racial slurs, Joanna Haigood's dance theater performance installation, performed by Zaccho Dance Theatre, addresses lin-


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gering contemporary racism, rooted in the lasting effects of America's slave trade. Even in the age of Obama, the performance acknowledges how Americans grapple with the residue of slavery and reunite a split house. Surrounded by two massive, rotating set pieces designed by visual artist Charles Trapolin, audience members are free to navigate the continuously running performance installation in the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts Forum. A post-performance discussion follows Friday's installment. Don't miss this immersive, compelling work. **(Potter)**

Fri/15, 8–10 p.m.;
Sat/16-Sun/17, 12-2 p.m. and 3–5 p.m., free
Yerba Buena Center for the Arts Forum
701 Mission, SF
(415) 978-5210
www.ybca.org

SATURDAY
APRIL 16

EVENT

"How-to Homestead: 11 in 11 Tour"
You can go on tour without ever leaving your city. That's the idealistic message of How-to Homestead's "11 in 11 Tour," a yearlong barnstorming series with dates planned for each of San Francisco's districts. Spearheaded by Melinda Stone, a University of San Francisco professor equally knowledgeable in matters of celluloid and soil, How-to Homestead's homebrew of entertainment and education draws on alternative cinema, practical workshops, and live music to create a distinctly flavorful commons. The fourth "11 in 11" program takes place at the historic Bayview Opera House and features a "Chickens in the City" workshop and contra dance call, in addition to the usual potluck dinner and film treats. With spring in the air, it should be an especially lively installment. **(Max Goldberg)**

4–10:30 p.m., $5 suggested donation
Bayview Opera House
4705 Third St., SF
www.howtohomestead.org

DANCE

ODC Dance Jam
At first the ODC Dance Jam consisted of half a dozen cute kids showing their prowess on an ODC/Dance opening night. Today ODC's youth program is much too big for such capers, and the tables have been turned. This year the professional company will make an appearance — with Brenda Way's *John Somebody* — at ODC Dance Jam's own concert, "Make the Road by Walking." Taking classes five times in addition to rehearsing, the 14-member troupe, ages 13-18, may not call itself pre-professional, but its dancers surely are on the way. KT Nelson, Kimi Okada, Bliss Kohlmeyer-Dowman, Greg Dawson, and Kim Epifano, about as professional a group as any, created choreography for them. **(Felciano)**

Sat/16, 8 p.m.; Sun/17, 4 and 7 p.m., $12
ODC Dance Commons
351 Shotwell, SF
(415) 863-9830
www.brownpapertickets.com/event/166923

SUNDAY
APRIL 17

MUSIC

Foxtails Brigade
(((folkYeah!))) and Antenna Farm Records host a release party in honor of San Francisco duo Foxtails Brigade's full-length debut, *The Bread and the Bait*. On its surface, *The Bread and the Bait* is as delicate as lace — the album art depicts a lady-like tea party in progress. But look closer (why are two of the women blindfolded? And why is one clutching a knife?) and listen closely: there's an underlying darkness cloaked in those ethereal vocals set against simple cello and violin melodies. Join in the celebration with musical performances by 'Tails and Rachel Fannan of Sleepy Sun, plus comedy by Brent Weinbach and Moeshe Kasher, and a fashion show featuring designs by Verriers and Sako, Lecon de Vetement, and Zoe Hong. **(Verzosa)**

With Rachel Fannan
8 p.m., $15
Swedish American Music Hall
2174 Market, SF
(415) 861-5016
www.swedishamericanhall.com

MUSIC

Wire
On a recent trip to New York City, I won tickets to watch Wire from the "Band Bench" on *Late Night with Jimmy Fallon*. Arriving at 30 Rock, I found a few other awkward music nerds who refused to take off their jackets looking forward to the performance. In a bit of TV magic, they filled out the 30 or so "hardcore fans" with tourists eager for a glimpse of Fallon guest Keanu Reeves. It could just be the standard practice, but it's also typical of the U.K. band's U.S. reception, remaining relatively unknown despite being perpetual critical darlings and inspiring alternative rock bands throughout a career spanning from the release of 1977's influential punk album, *Pink Flag*, to their most recent, *Red Barked Tree*. **(Ryan Prendiville)**

With Lumerians and DJ Callum McGowan
8 p.m., $21
Slim's
333 11th St., SF
(415) 255-0333
www.slims-sf.com SFBG

The Guardian listings deadline is two weeks prior to our Wednesday publication date. To submit an item for consideration, please include the title of the event, a brief description of the event, date and time, venue name, street address (listing cross streets only isn't sufficient), city, telephone number readers can call for more information, telephone number for media, and admission costs. Send information to Listings, the Guardian Building, 135 Mississippi St., SF, CA 94107; fax to (415) 487-2506; or e-mail (paste press release into e-mail body — no text attachments, please) to listings@sfbg.com. Digital photos may be submitted in jpeg format; the image must be at least 240 dpi and four inches by six inches in size. We regret we cannot accept listings over the phone.

(1) "Charles Phoenix Retro Slide Show" (see Thurs/14) (2) rocker-author Nikki Sixx (see Thurs/14); (3) Alonzo King's Lines Ballet (See Fri/15) (4) The Residents (see Fri/15); (5) Zaccho Dance Theatre (see Fri/15); (6) "How-to Homestead" (see Sat/16); (7) *Our Daily Bread* (see Thurs/14); (8) Foxtails Brigade (see Sun/17); (9) Wire (see Sun/17)

ALONZO KING'S LINES BALLET BY RJ MUNA; ZACCHO PHOTO BY FRENCH CLEMENTS *OUR DAILY BREAD* PHOTO BY ANA TERESA FERNANDEZ FOXTAILS BRIGADE PHOTO BY RIKI FELDMAN; WIRE PHOTO BY ALEX VANHE

arts + culture



"It began out of a sincere desire to get people working together," Laura Arrington (center, with Rachael Dichter) says about SQUART. Along with Julie Phelps (left) and Keith Hennessy (right), Arrington and others are galvanizing the local performance community.

GUARDIAN PHOTOS BY MATTHEW REAMER

Outside and inside

A burgeoning queer performance scene in the Bay Area is creating new zones

By Robert Avila
arts@sfbg.com

PERFORMANCE Some dramatic clouds hung darkly over the Headlands Center for the Arts on the last Sunday in March, threatening more than the prickly spray that had started to whip around in the cold and gusty air. By contrast, everything was bright and bustling inside Building 944, the repurposed 1907-era military barracks at the center of the Marin County artists retreat's secluded, picturesque coastal campus. The first-floor dining hall was still open until 3 p.m. — when the latest edition of SQUART was scheduled to begin upstairs — so arriving audience members gravitated to the long tables lining the unexpectedly beautiful room, revivified from spartan army drabness by artist Ann Hamilton.

Uncle Sam was not anticipating this crowd in 1907, let alone the anarchic spirit of creative community fostered by SQUART (short for spontaneous queer art). Then and now, Uncle Sam wants "you," but not your yoke-slipping imagination please. The performers running around loopy for lack of sleep — together with the center's varied flock of international resident-artists and the crowd arriving from the city to watch the results of SQUART's 24-hour venture in collaborative art-making — formed an alternative community, low-key and self-assured, the majority queer-identified, well-versed in strategies of critical resistance and up for anything. In striking ways, the four performance pieces communally created for that afternoon — and for that history-haunted place — eloquently registered the gaps and links in a century of social chaos.

All told, a moment from the last piece was probably my favorite. In a large first-floor room elegantly and eccentrically composed like something from a Peter Greenaway film, a good chunk of the audience had been pressed to the wall by a relentlessly advancing line of screaming men and women with their arms outstretched. Then a man rushed to the window and (with a vaguely camp bellicosity) ordered a small group of performers out the windows and up the hill. There in the cold drizzle they stood on the access road in shorts and tees, doing exercises, as two of the performers began to wrestle aggressively.

The "fight" inspired an unwitting passerby to come between them with real violence, as the audience gasped loudly in surprise and alarm at the unscheduled event. The good Samaritan, flushed and angry, cocked a confused glance at the audience of maybe 60 people filling the windows, and trudged back to his car and family and drove away, visibly shaken. The performance continued, in fact did not miss a beat, the performer at the window shouted a beautiful broken monologue full of yearning, confusion, and wonder interspersed with loud calls to "Retreat!" that sent the performers scrambling up the slippery hillside in the rain, bare limbs flailing, helpless, comical, and heartbreaking.

SQUART is the initiative of San Francisco–based choreographer Laura Arrington, one of a new generation of mostly queer artists under or around 30 who are making serious waves in the performance scene. Her own bounding, sharp-cornered, mercurial work has been staged at CounterPULSE (where she shared a much acclaimed bill with fellow artist-resident Jesse Hewit in August of 2010), Women on the Way, the National Queer Arts Festival, The Lab, and the Too Much! queer performance marathons. But SQUART is a unique undertaking in which the artist functions as a channel for collaborative expression. As such, it both epitomizes and catalyzes the current queer performance movement as a whole.

SQUART also epitomizes a community and an ethic of DIY art production that is on the rise just now across a range of insider/outsider artists in the Bay Area. It's a generational movement, but at the same time it's building on, and building relationships with, earlier generations of artists. It's predominately queer, but genuinely inclusive; it's DIY, but skilled and knowing; it's anti-institutional but includes many with practical and critical training from university programs; and it's been producing some of the most appealing, challenging, vital work in performance in the last few years. It's a highly fertile scene that, taken as a whole, amounts to a movement and a rare moment.

Modeled on reality-TV talent contests — but in opposition to the social Darwinism normally on display there — SQUART gives random teams of artists a set of parameters and two hours to come up with an original performance piece. A panel of "celebrity judges" from the wider arts community evaluates the results. The results have been surprising enough to participants and audiences alike to keep SQUART going through several iterations since its 2010 inception, always with the quick and affable Arrington as the host sporting her now trademark bullhorn.

"It began out of a sincere desire to get people working together and to get ideas out," says Arrington about SQUART's origins. "I'm suspicious of how isolating working can be — with grants, residencies, artist statements, etc. — how everything is 'my project,' 'my work.' I think ideas get better the more they are bounced around, and that stripping away the traditional hierarchies is important. It's dangerous when work becomes precious. [With] SQUART, you just have to create. There's no time to do anything else. It can be a big mess; often it's a really beautiful mess."

Arrington says SQUART started as a side project but has developed into something larger. "The Headlands SQUART

was a big step," she says, crediting program director Brian Karl with open-minded support of the undertaking. "We kind of took over the main building for 24 hours. It was crazy, but in the end some of the work was just staggering. The timing was pretty magical too. We got [choreographer] Meg Stuart [as a celebrity judge] because she was in town doing *Auf Den Tisch!* at Yerba Buena [Center for the Arts], and Big Art Group [Caden Manson and Jemma Nelson] happened to be up at Headlands while I was. Jess Curtis is back for a few months from Berlin. It was all quite perfect."

The coincidental calendar-pairing of SQUART and *Auf Den Tisch!* (which means "to put things on the table") was a striking alignment of the leading, established international contemporary performance represented by Berlin-based American Stuart and the new but internationally aware local scene. In making her long-overdue Bay Area debut (courtesy of YBCA), Stuart not only brought a project exploring the nature of collective improvisation, but drew performers from a local artistic milieu that included emerging queer performers like Julie Phelps and Jorge De Hoyos.

Keith Hennessy, the renowned interdisciplinary artist and performance maven who was both a performer and organizer for *Auf Den Tisch!*, says there are similarities between Stuart's improvisation project and SQUART.

"In some ways, the *Auf Den Tisch!* project is like a weeklong SQUART, with a much tighter selection of who's in it. There's a certain camp in contemporary dance and performance that was born out of really early queer theater, like Theater of the Ridiculous and Jack Smith, and that came to some people through performance art. I see that in both SQUART and *Auf Den Tisch!*"

But Hennessy adds a key distinction. "*Auf Den Tisch!* is more about improvisation than SQUART," he points out. "In SQUART you have to use improvisational strategies to survive, but it's actually about collective composition, which is really kind of amazing."

Hennessy — who was among the celebrity judges at the Headlands SQUART — has been a motive power himself in stitching together this younger generation of artists. Dancer/performer Harold Burns says he moved here from the East Coast partly inspired by Hennessy's work, "the idea of merging queer and radical with powerful performance that really broke boundaries." Burns joined workshops Hennessy led in November 2009 in the lead-up to Hennessy's anniversary season (workshops that would inspire the two annual Too Much! queer marathons). Burns calls those workshops an important catalyst in the development of the community and its momentum. "The relationships were already there," he explains, "but it personalized them more and took them to the next level." Arrington agrees. "I met a lot of the people I consider close personal friends and colleagues there. After that, Jesse [Hewit] and I (with our friend Hana Erdman) started a little workshop/experiment where we tried to gather collaborators with similar interests."

For his part, Hennessy got introduced to many of the younger artists through his participation judging earlier SQUARTs. In fact, SQUART and its larger community have been acquiring the regard of older, more established colleagues in a relatively short time.

David Szlasa can concur. "When I judged SQUART in October, there were 50 incredibly talented people making work who I barely knew," confesses the artist and programming director at Z Space (which, significantly, will be presenting new work by Laura Arrington and Jesse Hewit on its massive stage in December). "I realized the 20-something crew just came to town, and they're kicking ass."

Szlasa credits SQUART with opening his eyes to the recent shift in approach as well. "One of the things that distinguished [the new work] was its nonreliance on the institution. SQUART is a hugely successful, hugely popular thing put together through Facebook." For Szlasa, committed arts presenters like CounterPULSE and Z Space go only so far in explaining the success being enjoyed by artists like Arrington and Hewit or other of their peers.

"It's artists who are being built up on the support of a community," Szlasa notes, "rather than artists looking to institutions to find the support in the community for their work, which is a really different thing. It might be a small community that they're rallying, but it's significant. Maybe it's 200 people and they all see everything everybody does, but, you know, that's a thing. And it appears to be a mindset change also, which I really appreciate.



Jesse Hewit: "People are really talking about [institutional support] right now. People are getting more critical, which is good. It's good for the work." | GUARDIAN PHOTO BY MATTHEW REAMER

And I think that there's something for us — I say "us" as a representative of Z Space or that sort of institution — to consider and learn from that."

CounterPULSE's Jessica Robinson Love agrees. "These artists are not just interested in getting their own work out there. Most of them are also engaged in curating and producing each other's work, serving as dramaturge, writing about it, and generally working to support the community and not just themselves. That's where the strength comes from."

MAMA'S BIG HOUSE

In any preliminary mapping of the scene, such as the piece you are reading, SQUART is only one point of reference, albeit a prominent one. At the very least, one would need

CONTINUES ON PAGE 30 »



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FRIDAY NIGHTS @
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Perform CONT»

to include now-defunct Mama Calizo's Voice Factory, which for three years, under Dwayne Calizo, consistently supported exceptional work by queer artists, especially queer artists of color, in the old Jon Sims Center for the Arts space.

Just as crucial has been Mama Calizo's still venue-less but highly active successor organization, THEOFFCENTER, whose director Ernesto Sopprani helped organize and run the SQUART event at the Headlands. In fact, TOC includes a good swath of the community. Says artist and codirector Julie Phelps, "THEOFFCENTER rose from the dust [as] a loose collective of 20 to 30 people who just keep showing up, and keep making things happen."

You'd also need, for sure, to include Philip Huang's Home Theater Festival, BJ Dini's anarchist-inspired QAZ (queer autonomous zones); venues like CounterPULSE and The Garage as well as their residency programs; mentoring and collaborating queer performance elders like Hennessy, Jess Curtis, and Monique Jenkinson; the drag



Queer, radical, collective: (front, then clockwise from left) Harold Burns, Tessa Wills, Honey McMoney, Ernesto Sopprani, Aylin Guvenc, and Jorge De Hoyos. | GUARDIAN PHOTO BY MATTHEW REAMER

series led by Mica Sigourney; and a broad and often highly political host of outsider warehouse and home-based queer performance, as well as music-based work, across San Francisco and the East Bay.

"The artists in our network are making work without permission or money," says THEOFFCENTER's Sopprani. "We support one another and let the work and the questions motivating it speak for themselves. Laura Arrington's SQUART is the perfect example of that credo. Laura is a genius when it comes to building synergy. We support her work because we feel it supports the larger community. In both SQUART and TOC, artists are autonomous and free. It's a loose collective with the intention and desire to make something out of the ordinary happen. At the end of the day, that's what it's all about for us."

HOME IS WHERE THE ART IS

The Dana Street Theater is an inconspicuous venue, serving most of the year as Philip Huang's bedroom. In the first week of March, prospective patrons were alerted to upcoming performances by a blog site and a piece of yellow notepaper taped to the front door of his Berkeley apartment building, where some hasty red lettering announced, "Home Theater Festival. 'Eat, Pray, Tron.'"

The audience for the opening show of the festival — and there were about 30 of us the night I went — sat in a tight squeeze on the floor, camped on cushions or blankets. Huang greeted people as they came in. No reservations were necessary. The prices were $7.99 a ticket, or $4.99 if you're down on your luck. The scheduled curtain time was 8 p.m., though by the time Huang returned from a last-minute beer run it was more like 20 minutes after the hour. No one cared about the time, or that it seemed Huang hadn't really bothered to pick up his room before the show. Even before the malt liquor and box wine started circulating, the audience was primed.

The monthlong, second annual Home Theater Festival is Huang's Internet-orchestrated DIY affair. (And newly international: the same day I saw "Eat Pray Tron," people Down Under attended a program at Rebecca Cunningham's pad in Brisbane, Australia. In all, five countries and 30 shows are represented.)

Huang began in character as Ellen Fu, a bracingly frank Taiwanese lady in a black sleeveless number and clip-on earrings. Ellen led a seminar on how to pleasure your black lover. There was more: a disabled man making balloon animals, for instance. Huang was sharp but loose, ready to go with the moment. There was a lot of back-and-forth with pal Bryan Dini of the League of Burnt Children and the aforementioned QAZ. Seated sublimely against a wall, Dini interjected commentary as the mood struck him. Later in this carefree, careening, and irresistible evening, Huang paused for a special message to artists: "You have everything you need to do what you do right now," he told them. "You have everything you need to be happy."

The DIY spirit of Home Theater Festival, and of the larger movement it's part of, couldn't have asked for a more eloquent summation — or one that hinted so neatly at its radical response to a larger context of economic crisis and control. Huang is a charismatic figure, quick-witted and generous, lanky and handsome in thick-framed glasses and a beaming smile. He's a fearless, unflappable performer and activist (some of his interventions are documented in must-see YouTube videos). He also makes the most outspoken people sound awfully tactful.

"I think most arts institutions, galleries, foundations, and theaters are useless," he says. "They keep artists in a state of dependency; they encourage a mindset that they hold all opportunities and paths to legitimacy and artists are only ever on the receiving end. That's why they keep putting out tired workshops and seminars that teach people to do lame shit like write grants and fundraise and network and do marketing and write press releases. All of that shit makes my dick limp, and none of it is necessary.

"I, in particular, believe that queer artists should not be professionals," Huang explains. "We should burn bright and burn out. We have a responsibility to society as a

whole to scare the shit out of people. We should be the monsters they accuse us of being. Every society needs to enact its shadows, and it's our sacred duty, our sacred function, to do that for the world."

Huang argues the fulfillment of that function, the fulfillment of a truly subversive art, necessarily takes place outside of institutions. "Institutions, for the most part, are run by fearful, well-meaning people, to apply a phrase by Kirk Read, and to keep their heads above water, they can never really disturb the status quo. So I encourage queers to break away from institutions for their own independence, certainly, but also to restore queer art to its grimy gutter."

"This is quite a topic at the moment," acknowledges Arrington when I ask her about the DIY-versus-institution issue. "For myself, I like hybrid situations. I will always have house shows and do the less structured stuff, but I also love rigorously worked art. I love high production value. In my experience, most institutions are made up of incredibly hard-working people sincerely trying to nurture art. SQUART happening at Headlands is a great example. It's a totally nontraditional format happening in quite a traditional space." At the same time, she insists, "institutional success is not all there is. I think, actually I know, bigger issues of politics, economics, and environment are going to reshape how art gets made, both inside and outside institutions."

Jesse Hewit agrees that the issue of institutional support has become a serious dividing line, though he finds positive aspects to the debate as well. "People are really talking about this right now. On the one hand there's this group of people, myself included, who are working in conjunction with Angela Maddox over at YBCA curatorially to mobilize the community [around] what's going on in an international scene in terms of contemporary performance. And there are a lot of people who feel at odds with that. There's this weird tension." Hewit notes the change has occurred over the last six months: "The big love fest is over. People are getting more critical, which is good. It's good for the work. The work has been becoming more excellent."

Hewit suggests the uneven distribution of funding among the larger community plays some part in the increased tension, which seems all but inevitable, but he also cites a resistance to engaging an international context for contemporary performance. "We're just not a super savvy contemporary performance/dance community," he admits. At the same time, he appreciates the invention and novelty of the work being done on its own terms: "We're doing our own thing. We're kind of creating our own mini canon."

Hennessy echoes the notion that the work is generally growing stronger, wherever it may stand with respect to funding. On the anti-institutional side, he stresses the shrewdness in something like the Home Theater Festival. "Part of it is an empowerment strategy," he says, pointing out that Huang's project grew from Huang's experiments with private performances, which granted him — despite a lack of formal training or connections—the permission to consider himself an artist. "He took that personal experience and is using it as almost a viral infection," says Hennessy. "The Home Theater Festival is simultaneously a super sophisticated aesthetic strategy and an amateur hour—anyone can do whatever they want and it's not precious. It's just in your house and it's 20 people and they paid $7.99."

Hennessy stresses that this is more than just a theoretical move. "There are all these practical things: no middleman, a really accessible door price, money goes directly to the artist." In a society that easily dismisses artist labor, Hennessy sees the Home Theater Festival "starting to rebuild this broken bond between the artist and society by making everything really transparent, inviting people into your home. I think all the issues around private and public are really fascinating [and] very much inspired by certain feminist issues that have come to be in the foreground of what queer is. There's all kinds of lineage in that."

Wherever the contradictions and tensions may ultimately lead, this continues to be an exciting moment across a range of contemporary performance in the Bay Area. For its part, THEOFFCENTER is looking ahead to their second season with a conviction born of early but impressive successes many can rally behind. Sopprani says TOC will be pushing work "that integrates the arts and artists across platforms and communities." His examples include *Killer Queen: The Story of Paco the Pink Pounder*, a show about a gay boxer that will be staged in actual boxing rings in San Francisco and Los Angeles; and Taylor Mac's *The Lily's Revenge*, in which TOC comes on board as a community partner in the Magic Theatre's much anticipated Bay Area premiere.



Along with Keith Hennessy and Monique Jenkinson, Jess Curtis is a primary influence on a new wave of performance within the Bay Area. | PHOTO BY SVEN HAGOLANI

"We are hoping to stick around for the long term," says Sopprani, marveling at all they've accomplished thus far. "It's amazing what comes out of putting the artist first. Entire houses continue to get filled. People are liking what they see, and I am very proud of us all." SFBG

Special thanks to Mark McBeth (markmcbethprojects.com) for his invaluable "field recordings in performance anthropology," which gave audiovisual access to some of the performances and artists drawn on for this article.

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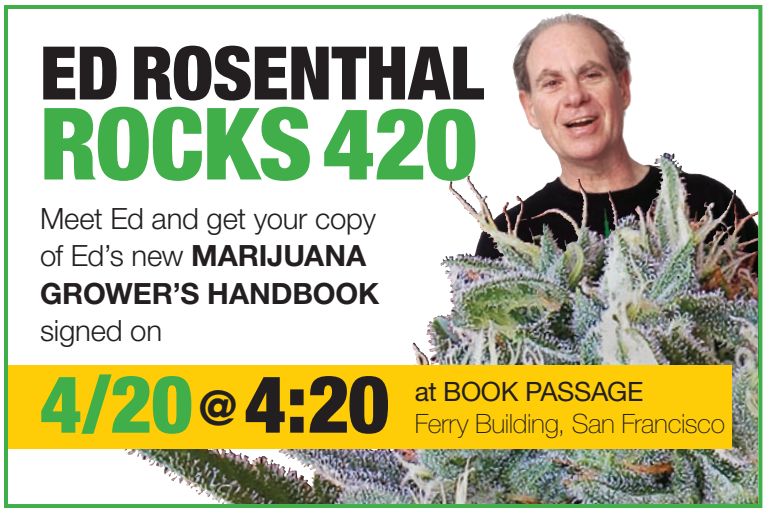
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A long time ago, in a galaxy not far away

SCI-FI DOCUMENTARY Recalling a simpler time — before mass commercialization and marketing took over the world of science fiction, pop culture, and fan conventions — local filmmaker Tom Wyrsch's new documentary *Back To Space-Con* conveys the story of the home-grown, grassroots-fueled sci-fi conventions of the 1970s, told through interviews with the people behind the events, fans who were there, and rare footage shot on location here in the Bay Area more than 30 years ago.

Coming off the successes of his first two projects, 2008's *Watch Horror Films, Keep America Strong*, which looked at the local TV phenomenon *Creature Features* and last year's wildly popular *Remembering Playland At The Beach,* about the now-gone San Francisco beach-side amusement park, it wasn't hard for Wyrsch to decide on what subject to tackle next.

Several years ago, the late Bob Wilkins, former host of *Creature Features*, had given Wyrsch a treasure trove of one-of-a-kind 16mm footage taken for his show at a series of *Star Trek* and sci-fi conventions, showing a great array of fans, their handmade costumes, and of course, the many special guests and celebrities who were on hand.

Wyrsch himself had attended some of these events, the larger ones called "Space-Con," when he was growing up in the Bay Area. "At that time they were a brand new experience," says Wyrsch. "To go to these conventions was just fabulous. And they definitely left a mark."

With his fond memories in place and the opportunity to use Wilkins' rare original footage, Wyrsch decided to interview the people who helped put on the shows, along with those who had attended the conventions as fans, all to help share the feeling of what it was like back then, which the film does very effectively.

"My approach to making documentaries is to really do two things: First, I want to take people back who actually experienced it. The other part is, I want to be able to take people there who never had a chance to go because they either weren't in the area or they were too young," says Wyrsch.

One of the great things about *Back To Space-Con* is seeing all the homespun costumes that fans wore — this was before the *Star Trek* movies started being made, and for some of the conventions included here, just before and at the beginning of the *Star Wars* (1977) phenomenon. There were virtually no official costumes or merchandise, and many of the people interviewed remark how wonderful it was to see such creativity and excitement in their fellow fans.

"[Space-Cons] were fan-based conventions that really did not have anything to do with the industry. They were the fans putting on shows for each other," says Wyrsch. "In the film you can see how they are the grassroots movement of conventions that led to the ones we have today."

Wyrsch is grateful to have been able to use so much original film footage, and he hopes viewers will appreciate how rare it is that material like this has survived all this time.

"What the younger generation doesn't know was that it was very difficult and very expensive to go out in the field and do an interview or to film indoors because of lighting and the old cameras," he explains. "With video and all the high-tech electronics and computers you can put in the camera [today], you don't have to worry about that stuff anymore. But back then, it was tough, and with a lot of interviews they would go out and do them and then throw the film away because there was no use to it anymore and it took up a lot of storage space. Bob [Wilkins] kept this, and he kept part of history."

Wyrsch will be on hand at a special *Back to Space-Con* premiere event at the Balboa Theater, along with former Chronicle writer and *Creature Features* host John Stanley, and Ernie Fosselius, the man behind the *Star Wars* spoof *Hardware Wars* (1978).

"I think people get to see the simplicity that was there in the seventies, it wasn't so regimented like they are nowadays," says Wyrsch. "And people love that." **(Sean McCourt)**

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Out of the shadows

Cults is made up of real people, not lizard people

By Amber Schadewald
arts@sfbg.com

MUSIC The Cults out of the bag.



The initial mystery surrounding the Brooklyn band of two has been solved, as rumors turned into a year of lengthy articles, photographs, and live performances, all soothing the flea-ridden hype. The official promise of a debut full-length this summer is sure to stimulate some additional excitement, but once again the information age has won and indie snoops are left with a furry clump of truth.



Brian Oblivion of Cults: "There's something so tough about '50s pop music, a spirit in that music that gets written off as retro when new acts try to perform it. It's moving. There's something special there."

"There's no real story behind us. We're just real people," explains Brian Oblivion, the male half of Cults. While it may seem like some rock stars are hiding wizard or robot identities, believe it or not, all musicians are indeed "just real people." Oblivion attempts to elaborate on this idea, but he and girlfriend Madeline Follin, the female half of the band, are riding in a tour van through some sketchy airwaves. His voice keeps transforming into robotic and scratchy sounds, which makes his theory slightly suspicious.

But no — the Cults are neither lizard-people nor alien-forms. They're not angry cult leaders or brainwashed followers for that matter. The Internet has explained it all and the facts are clearly posted: Oblivion and Follin are both 22, from San Diego, and going to film school in New York City.

Follin grew up swaddled in punk music, and Oblivion always had a thing for surf-rock, but when the two of them began their courtship, a musical agreement had to commence. Soul, '50s pop, and '60s girl-groups like Lesley Gore and the Shangri-Las became a pleasant middle ground. When the lovers began to play music together, their inspiration was a direct pipeline to these performers; musicians who could make lemons into limoncello and drape a lacy haze over any foggy day.

"There's something so tough about '50s pop music," says Oblivion. He respects the genre's mold-breaking ideas, from its social connotations and ability to blur race barriers to its physical elements, like new echo effects and guitar tones. "There's lots of spirit in that music that gets written off as retro when new acts try to perform it. But there's a sentiment in it that we like. It's moving. There's something special there."

Music by Cults makes daisies grow and serious cares seem like spoonfuls of acid-laced sugar. Everything is sublime beneath Follin's gorgeous bell-like vocals, even when she sings about naughty behaviors, crying, and shit relationships. And they're not the only young band that has begun harnessing the Motown stallion. Best Coast is the most direct example, but groups like Warpaint and Dom have also turned rock back a few pages, spawning a fresh generation of ears ready to challenge the music industry's current corporate-pop bill.

"Madeline has a theory about [the '50s and '60s pop revival]," Oblivion says. "We're just old enough now to appreciate it. Our parents grew up listening to it because it was our grandparents' style. But we're the ones going back and rediscovering. Our parents are still into their '80s Rolling Stones records. Our generation is excited because we're digging in Dumpsters and finding these old records — and we're finding this music without having it shoved in our faces."

Like treasure chests buried beneath a sea of Rihannas, American Idols, and decades of rock, the serenades of brass instruments, cheery bass lines, hollow voices, and forlorn lyrics are bubbling up to the surface. It's discovery and reacquainted love. Aging 40 years or more, these albums may be dusty and scratched, their performers long absent from daily gossip rags, yet there's still some element of mystery that has regrown from the ashes of the era. That mystery makes for good hype, but as Cults have learned, you've got to come out of the shadows to make solid impressions.

"It's fun to play live and interact with audiences. Live [music] is so important — it's the only way to make money, and right now shows are doing awesome," Oblivion says with his crackly, phone-impaired voice, noting his admiration for indie bands that are selling out large venues. He's calling it a revolution.

"People want to have an experience, something to hold onto. They're tired of the MP3s that move around through the air, because it's just not the same as being at a show and feeling the music come out of the speakers. It's immaterial. You walk away with a feeling."

That feeling is the revolution. SFBG

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Breaking point

Henry's Crime's emerging star: middle-aged Keanu Reeves

By Dennis Harvey
arts@sfbg.com

FILM When erstwhile Hitchcock (1948's *Rope*, 1951's *Strangers on a Train*) protagonist Farley Granger died last month, obituaries kindly forgot that hitherto he'd been judged as a limited-range pretty boy luckily cast in a few iconic films.

Beauty alone certainly can get you pretty far in Hollywood, now as then. But Granger's big-lashed, puppy-eyed, dark-haired hunk had charms not strictly visual, notably a mile-wide vulnerability streak poignant in classic noir films like 1949's *They Live By Night* and 1950's *Edge of Doom*. He wasn't that impressive an actor, or even an imposing personality like many golden age stars. But he communicated an attractive, soulful decency.

Similarly positioned is Keanu Reeves, who has managed a longer mainstream Hollywood ride while seldom escaping the perception that he hugely lucked out. He's one of those actors spectacularly franchise-wealthy — due to those *Matrix* movies wherein his usual baffled solemnity was ideal — yet whom the public otherwise feels scant evident loyalty toward, and producers don't know what to do with. Now that he's aging out of his looks, can he transform into a character actor à la the similarly problematic Kevin Costner?

Maybe. Reeves played charming suitors in *Something's Gotta Give* (2003) and *The Private Lives of Pippa Lee* (2009), both very much supporting roles. He seems increasingly interested in indie films, which he surely doesn't need to pay the rent. They generally suit him more than the myriad large-scale fantasy, action, or romantic vehicles that followed *The Matrix* (1999) and *Speed* (1994).

He's certainly the best reason to see *Henry's Crime*, a pleasant, middling, retro crime caper costarring frequently better actors at dimmer wattage than usual. Although uneven, Reeves still offers a turn equal to (if quite different from) his personal bests: as the second half of a stoner-goofball team in the *Bill and Ted* movies, and as Siddhartha in the good parts of Bertolucci's silly *Little Buddha* (1993), which fully tapped a nirvanic tranquility behind his screen passivity.

Henry's Crime is an old hat out of the Damon Runyon trunk, in which lovable crooks mix it up with hoity theatrical types and nobody gets hurt except (barely) the really bad guys. James Caan — who starred in similar enterprises during their post-*The Sting* heyday, particularly 1976's excessively dissed *Harry and Walter Go To New York* — plays the veteran convict-conman who schools Reeves' hapless Buffalo, N.Y., toll-taker Henry after our hero is slammer-thrown for an armed robbery he didn't know he was embroiled in until it was over.

Upon release, Henry discovers the targeted bank and nearby theater had a Prohibition-era secret tunnel between them. Having already done the time, he figures he might as well do the crime by finishing the aborted bank job for real. He enlists local stage diva Julie (Vera Farmiga) as well as Caan's parole-coaxed Max. Resulting wacky hijinks render Max a theater "volunteer" and Henry as Julie's *Cherry Orchard* costar, all so they can access the walled-up passageway to the bank vault.

Much of this is ridiculous, of course, and not intentionally so. We can't believe Henry/Reeves is a stage "natural," for Chekhov or anything else (despite Mr. Ted having played Hamlet in 1995 Winnipeg). Caan and a solid support cast hit predictable notes; romantic interest Farmiga is atypically shallow in her admittedly stereotypical role. Yet her superior thespian chops seem to stir something in Reeves, who remains wooden at times but also flags a relaxed sweetness in their scenes and elsewhere. The climax is classic movies-getting-how-theater-works-wrong. But its contrivance functions to some extent because the lead actor convinces us it should.

Reeves is getting a tad jowly now, physique likewise surrendering to gravity. This could be great for him: he's made his money already, maybe he can now surrender to being something more-less-other than a box-office behemoth. Costner managed it with *The Upside of Anger* (2005) and *The Company Men* (2010), while still playing the occasional lead (albeit in flops). The critical success he's had as middle-aged losers after a run of critically disclaimed variably-superheroes could be Ted-slash-Neo's own, if he's willing to surrender glamour that much. He'd hardly be the first huge movie star to finally get some respect thataway. But he might be the (still) cutest. SFBG



A falsely accused ex-con (Keanu Reeves) plots his first real robbery in *Henry's Crime*.

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Flannelalia

Pladra builds the perfect plaid shirt, locally

By Marke B.
marke@sfbg.com

PLAID OBSESSION We live in a post-Etsy world, people, and the latest homemade, zero-kilometer focus is on small-batch clothing production. As usual, the Bay Area is taking a lead here, weaving its green intentions and entrepreneurial zeal into its free-spirited fashion sense and a strong garment manufacturing legacy — and producing stylish duds with enough professional veneer to take to the runway or just out for a beer.

The three sharp dudes from Pladra (www.pladra.com) — Scott Ellison, Ian Ernzer, and Jeff Ladra — add another Bay tradition to the mix: classically avid sportiness. "As passionate outdoorsmen, we have never found a flannel that we could wear both in the field and to the bar after getting blood on it," they say, and so they set about combining their love of surfing, fly-fishing, camping, hunting, skateboarding, and nature photography with flawless design skills and vintage beauty. (It doesn't hurt that a good plaid flannel is the one item that still unites many of our current style tribes.)

I admit I'm a flannel freak, and Pladra's three current lines, including an awesome one for women, had me wiping drool off my keyboard. But I wanted a glimpse into the new local-production trend, too, and the Pladra boys happily provided, answering my questions over e-mail.

SFBG *Pladra is all about plaid flannel — how'd you come to focus on that? Will you be expanding?*
PLADRA I think it's safe to say we've all had a few go-to flannels throughout our lives. You know, the one you camp in, then come home and go straight to a bar or concert in, then wear to work the next day — each stain is a story and a memory. In terms of our growth, we'd love to let everything grow at its own pace, although we definitely have some ideas. For now, we're keeping production small and tight. We wanted to start with plaid flannel shirts because they're timeless and represent an iconic outdoor style we feel really connects to life in the Bay Area. It's funny that people peg flannels as a trend, but even the gold miners wore flannel. Jeff grew up here, and his grandparents spent their whole lives building and racing motorcycles. He still has photos of them wearing flannels.

SFBG *Right now you're foregoing retail outlets and selling direct from your website. I'm assuming that's to keep costs down, yes? Has this been a problem in regard to getting your product in front of people?*



"I think it's safe to say we've all had a few go-to flannels throughout our lives." Pladra makes button-downs for keeps.
PHOTO BY SCOTT ELLISON

PLADRA That's true, we're selling direct through our website to maintain the lowest price possible. Our goal is not to turn a profit, but to make the best garment possible at the most reasonable price — and our price range is $89–$109. Truth be told, this is what it costs to have a quality, American-made, custom shirt. We've found that people who initially scoff at our prices backpedal when they find out what goes into making something in the USA. Americans are so accustomed to paying for cheap garments that are imported mostly from Asia. We're not condemning that, the truth is that a lot of production out of Asia has great quality. But at a certain point, we need to step back and consider the ramifications that one of the USA's largest imports is apparel. Many U.S. cities used be the home to some of the best and biggest fabric mills in the world. Now what? All the mills are overseas. Very few companies can afford to use fabric milled in the USA. Even denim companies have to use reclaimed fabric.

The direct selling approach certainly makes it difficult to reach a wide range of people off the bat. But we do want to offer reasonable pricing to our customers. We want to focus on the brand integrity and we don't want to dilute our product and blast it everywhere right away. We are taking a slow and careful approach in our growth.

SFBG *What were the specific challenges of designing and producing everything in San Francisco?*
PLADRA It was really important to us to keep things local and support local businesses. But limiting our geographic range also meant limiting our accessibility to materials that would maintain our desired quality while not forcing our prices to skyrocket. That meant we had to challenge ourselves to search harder for vendors that could deliver great materials and finishing — and we ended up partnering with some incredible ones who went above and beyond to support our vision.

SFBG *Pladra isn't just all about hunting and designing. What are some of your favorite shops and bars in SF?*
PLADRA Shopping-wise, we really like Union Made in the Castro. Our friends at Park Life in the Inner Richmond and the General Store in the Outer Sunset offer amazing home-produced goods. And the Aqua and Mollusk surf shops have always been amazing at supporting their communities. As for going out, we could happily spend the rest of our lives drinking our way through the menus at Toronado and Alembic. And we just scored one of our favorite clubs, 111 Minna, to host our official launch party. See you there? SFBG

PLADRA LAUNCH PARTY
Tues/26, 5 p.m.–9 p.m., free. 111 Minna, SF. www.111minnagallery.com

In "After Caravaggio" at Patricia Sweetow Gallery, local artist Jamie Vasta works with glitter and with friends to restage paintings from the early 17th century while portraying a contemporary queer milieu. | JAMIE VASTA, DETAIL FROM *FILLIDE*, *1596*, 2011; DETAIL FROM *SAN GIOVANNI BATTISTA*, *1602*, 2011



All that glitters

By Matt Sussman
arts@sfbg.com

HAIRY EYEBALL What happens to appropriation after camp? That's the intriguing question posed and answered by Jamie Vasta's glitzy and technically impressive homage to late 16th- and early 17th-century Italian painter Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, currently hanging at Patricia Sweetow.

Working from photographs of famous Caravaggio paintings playfully restaged by her circle of friends (maybe you've seen some of them out and about at queer and/or literary events?), Vasta painstakingly reproduces the images on wood panel using several Michael's craft stores' worth of colored glitter.

There's Michelle Tea as Judith beheading Holofernes with a butcher knife. Bacchus, whom Caravaggio famously depicted as visibly ill from too much drink, has been transformed into a cheerful woman who, champagne flute aloft mid-toast, looks no worse for wear on her living room couch. (Perhaps it's due to the empty pill bottles Vasta scattered in the foreground, along with the mountain of produce that supplants the original's modest ripe peaches and grape bunch.) A red swath of fabric and nudity are all that connect the 1602 St. John the Baptist to his contemporary, Chihuahua-holding female counterpart.

Vasta's most dramatic reworking is *Deposizione, 1602*, which transports the downward cascade of mourning figures in the monumental *Entombment of Christ* (1602) to a Northern California beach at low tide, and trades the original's obfuscatory black background for the shimmery blue mirror of sea-against-sky.

Caravaggio was as famous for his dramatic chiaroscuro as for his unprecedented naturalism, and Vasta pays as much attention to approximating the shades of black behind her subjects as she does their skin tone or the folds of the blankets they're posed on. It's doubly impressive that, while working with an entirely different medium, she is able to impart the palpable physicality of light falling on the lapel of a dark blazer or waves gently lapping over sunlit shoals.

Vasta's casting choices are undoubtedly a cheeky nod to Caravaggio's controversial use of courtesans and common folk as live models for his biblical subjects. But her paintings function as portraits in their own right of San Francisco's current queer milieu, as much as they are tributes to another artist. And despite their sparkling surfaces, they are not as campy in their methods or didactic in their aim as, say, Yasumasa Morimura's photographic interventions into the Western art historical cannon.

Caravaggio, however, is certainly no stranger to queer advances. After his rediscovery by art historians in the early 20th century, he became something of a cause célèbre for queer male artists such as filmmaker Derek Jarman, who were moved by — perhaps as the poet Thom Gunn was while gazing at Saul/Paul's ecstasy in *The Conversion of St. Paul* (1600) — the painter's recognition of some hidden sensuous reverse: "an alternate/Candour and secrecy inside the skin."

Vasta's subjects harbor no secrets. Appropriate to our time and place, they wear their desire on their sleeves (if they're wearing sleeves at all) and stand with the casual stance and relaxed mien of someone posing for a photo bound for a Facebook wall, or in the case of the full-frontal cupid of *Amor Vincit Omnia, 1602*, an Adam4Adam profile.

Perhaps it's simply for lack of wall space (or modesty concerns?) that you have to duck into the gallery's back office to see Cupid — once a pudgy adolescent with marble flesh, now a more well-endowed scruffy 20-something — in all his glory. Certainly there is no trace of the "unfathomable nature of the erotic" that contemporary art historians Leo Bersani and Ulysse Dutoit flagged in Caravaggio's original. Vasta's glittering cherub isn't sending out any mixed signals: love has conquered all. SFBG

JAMIE VASTA: AFTER CARAVAGGIO
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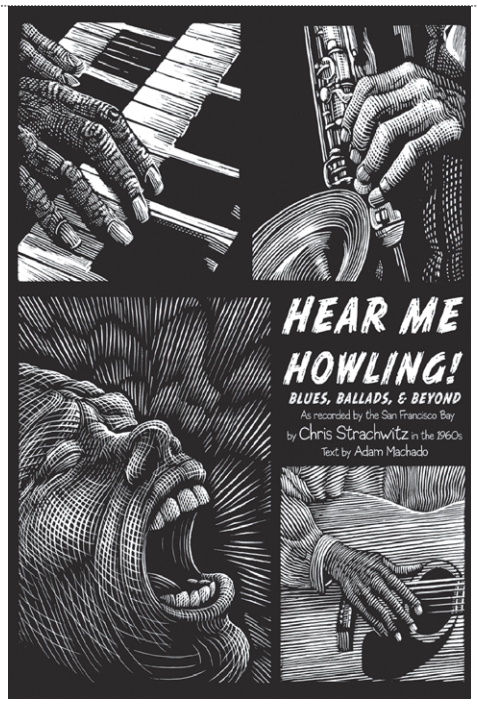
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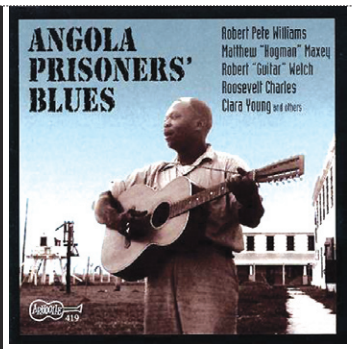
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Founder Chris Strachwitz on Arhoolie Records' releases: "They are all very down to earth, totally alive and vibrant, from people who have mostly had a rough life."

Hear me howling!

Arhoolie Records looks forward by preserving the past

By Nicole Gluckstern
arts@sfbg.com

MUSIC Last November, with little fanfare, homegrown roots music empire Arhoolie Records turned 50, an almost unbelievable milestone for a niche music label dedicated to the lasting preservation of regional music in an increasingly disposable MP3 world.

It wasn't until this February that Arhoolie even scheduled a celebration, the proceeds of which went to fund the Arhoolie Foundation, the 16-year-old nonprofit dedicated to making a digital archive of founder Chris Strachwitz's vast miscellany of Mexican and Mexican American recordings — the Frontera Collection — widely considered to be the largest of its kind on both sides of the border. Conceived as a research resource and historical documentation of the recordings, the digitized files are stored and accessible at the Chicano Studies Research Center library at UCLA (www.chicano.ucla.edu). The physical collection of approximately 46,000 units, housed in a climate-controlled basement in El Cerrito, stands as a fragile yet monumental testament to the mostly under-recognized talents of literally thousands of music-makers.

Strachwitz himself, a seemingly boundless wellspring of enthusiasm at 79, slowed only by a recalcitrant hip (recently replaced), attributes the label's longevity in part to his own stubborn "fanaticism" for music, a trait shared by his small yet dedicated staff. From Strachwitz's well-documented obsession with tracking down Lightnin' Hopkins to record him in 1959, to his increasingly far-flung forays into the backwoods and swamps of the musically-diverse South, his emphasis has been on excavating the genuine, the raw, and the regionally significant. The diversity of music that Arhoolie publishes and records ranges in style from dirty blues to folk ballads, Cajun zydeco to conjunto. The tie that binds them isn't genre, but emotional content.

"They are all very down to earth, totally alive and vibrant, from people who have mostly had a rough life," Strachwitz explains. Perhaps best known for their bang-for-your-buck compilations assembled by region or genre: *15 Early Tejano Classics*, *Angola Prisoner's Blues*, *Masters of the Folk Violin*, Arhoolie has also released a number of seminal single-artist albums. *Bogalusa Boogie* by recent Grammy Hall of Fame inductee Clifton Chenier, Flaco Jiménez's 1986 Grammy-winning ranchera album *Ay Te Dejo en San Antonio*, and the Pine Leaf Boys' 2007 Grammy-nominated Cajun dance album *Blues de Musicien* exemplify Arhoolie's commitment to unadorned authenticity.

Though it's been a few years since Arhoolie recorded any new material, there's a stockpile of one-of-a-kind field recordings patiently awaiting release. A recent addition to the Arhoolie canon is 2010's *Hear Me Howling*, a four-CD collection housed in the handsome confines of a hardcover scrapbook. This 72-track compilation of raw material, gleaned from a series of Bay Area recording sessions from 1954-71, captures the essence of the music as well as the musicians in the moment: a humorous reference about Strachwitz's "new recording machine," improvised by skiffle group The Skid Band; a soft-spoken call for requests by bluesman Mance Lipscomb; a brief but earnest sermon delivered by the Rev. Louis Overstreet before he launches into an anthem on his electric guitar.

On several of *Hear Me Howling*'s tracks, you can hear Strachwitz's distinctive laugh carrying above the responsive noises of the audience. The intimacy of these mostly home recordings brings the circumstances they were recorded in to life in a way that no studio polish can mimic. Each is an aural document of a precise place and time.

Aural documents are what head Frontera Collection archivist (and trombonist for radical ska-punk ensemble La Plebe) Antonio Cuellar specializes in. His Sisyphean task is to scan and digitize a copy of every album — he's been working for nine years, focusing primarily on the 78s and 45s that make up the bulk of the collection. After listening to a recording, Cuellar compiles a list of keywords to append to the digital file. Recurring themes and keywords such as "patriotism" (four hits), "praise of beauty" (3,590 hits), "executions" (32), and "trabajo de emigrante" (277) are entered into the digital database, along with a high-quality scan of the physical vinyl, and notes on the artists (Hermanas Segovia, Narciso Martínez, Orquesta La Campaña) and style of music (conjunto, ranchera, bolero, vals bajito, and Latino rock and soul).

"Often the only information left about a recording is on the label," explains Cuellar, who extracts what he can from each. But besides collecting discards from jukebox joints, radio stations, and major label backstock, Strachwitz acquired several now-defunct labels lock, stock, and-barrel, including Falcón and Ideal. This has allowed him to expand on the information he archives, noting, for example, what a particular recording artist was paid ($10 and a six-pack) or who was in the backing band. It's painstaking, "sometimes tedious" work, but Cuellar, who may be the only person besides Strachwitz to have listened to so much of the collection, has a clear sense of its historical importance.

"Probably 99.9 percent of these artists are unknown," Cuellar points out. "If I do a search for them online, it directs me back to Arhoolie, to the information that we have here ... [Whereas] I can go and search for information about the most obscure blues guy, and he's going to have something written about him."

"It was Guillermo Hernandez [the late former director of UCLA's Chicano Studies Research Center] who made me aware that this music was really the literature of the campesinos," Strachwitz muses. "When he discovered I had all these damn old records, he became totally intrigued. Because nobody at that time seemed to know they had such a long history."

"It definitely influences me," notes Cuellar, who was born in Mexico. "It's helped open my eyes to my own history." SFBG

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Director Fred Dekker (at left, with child actor Ashley Bank) on the set of his 1987 cult favorite, *The Monster Squad*. Other works include 1986's *Night of the Creeps* and several *Tales from the Crypt* episides. | PHOTOS COURTESY FRED DEKKER

Transylvania twist

Scarin' up memories with *The Monster Squad*'s Fred Dekker

By Sean McCourt
arts@sfbg.com

FILM For many devoted fans of horror films who grew up in the 1980s — especially those who were monster kids in spirit or became one in the ensuing years — the 1987 movie *The Monster Squad* has a special, firmly staked place in their hearts.

Paying tribute to the icons of the classic Universal monster pantheon while weaving a modern storyline into the mix, writer and director Fred Dekker created a now-cult favorite, a film that is scary and funny, entertaining and touching all at the same time.

Dekker, who was born in San Francisco and grew up in Marin County, will appear for a post-screening Q&A after *The Monster Squad* unspools at the Castro Theatre, part of Midnites for Maniacs' "Heavy Metal Monster Mash" (the rest of the mash: 1981's *Heavy Metal*, 1984's *This is Spinal Tap*, 1986's *Trick or Treat*, and 1984's *Monster Dog*).

"I loved the Universal monster movies and would stay up on Saturday nights and watch those on TV, but I also loved *The Little Rascals* and *Our Gang* and Abbott and Costello," Dekker says. "*The Monster Squad* came out of my idea to kind of do a new take on *Our Gang* — kids with a club who all have their own lives apart from their parents and grown-ups — [mixed] with the *Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein* (1948) approach, where they meet the classic Universal monsters. That was the genesis of it in a nutshell."

Although the film has finally gotten some of the recognition it deserves over the past several years, culminating in a two-disc 20th anniversary edition DVD release, along with several tributes and live events around the country, it was not considered a success at the box office when initially released.

"It was a little depressing for me because I had worked so hard on it and I felt like I hadn't connected, but I'm happy that we made the movie that we wanted to make," the director says. "We made a very peculiar kind of movie. We made it for ourselves, and a lot of the choices that seem a little politically incorrect now actually make the movie, I think, hold up better because we were true to the characters and our experience as kids. I think that people respond to that, the verisimilitude of it."

In addition to the bold, creative reimagining of the monsters and their design and characteristics, Dekker added another layer of depth to the story with the character referred to as "Scary German Guy." Viewers discover he's a survivor of a Nazi concentration camp when he tells the kids that he has dealt with "monsters" before, and the camera zooms in on his camp tattoo.

"I believe that genre stuff only really works if it's got some foot in reality that an audience can relate to," Dekker explains. "I think you have to imagine that the world you're seeing in the movie is the world you live in. It makes those fantastical elements more believable."

Dekker didn't realize that *The Monster Squad* had become such a beloved part of so many people's lives until a few years ago, when he was invited to a tribute event in Austin. These days, he enjoys attending screenings and events, and is looking forward to answering questions from local fans on Saturday.

"I found that the movie had this enormous following from the people who had grown up with it and taken it to heart because they saw themselves in it," he says. "It's been really gratifying in a weird way, because it did find its audience — it just took 20 years." SFBG

MIDNITES FOR MANIACS: HEAVY METAL MONSTER MASH
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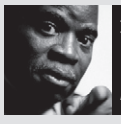
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(Tsugaru-Shamisen)
with YOICHI NOZAKI (piano)

Tues, April 19
MARCIA BALL
Peace, Love & BBQ - CD Release

Wed, April 20
Duke Ellington Birthday Concert
MARCUS SHELBY ORCHESTRA

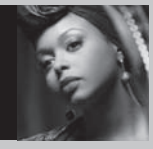
Thurs, April 21
LESTER CHAMBERS' BLUES REVUE
with STEVE CROPPER

oakland

Wed, April 13
ORQUESTA LA MODERNA TRADICIÓN

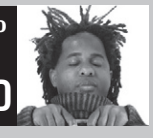
Thurs, April 14
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plus Uruguayan Candombe Drums

Fri-Sun, April 15-17
CHRISETTE MICHELE
Grammy Award Winner



Mon, April 18
JUSTIN HELLMAN
FAREWELL CONCERT

Tues-Wed, April 19-20
VICTOR WOOTEN BAND



Thurs, April 21
EAST BAY SOUL

Fri-Sun, April 22-24
TANK



Mon, April 25
QUEENS OF BOOGIE WOOGIE

Tues, April 26
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Sa 4.16 BURLESQUE MOULIN & RED HOTS PRESENT:
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Steer north, Marina-bound Missionite: Classy cocktailing awaits at Marengo on Union (left) and Delarosa (right). | DELAROSA PHOTO BY YELP USER LAUREN E.



Captain James Cook of the 94123

A Missionite's guide to the Marina

By Ruggy Joesten
ruggy@yelp.com

RUGGY'S YELP When that burning yellow ball of helium makes a rare appearance in the city, shucking out wads of vitamin D like Lil' Wayne at a titty bar, it's hard not to want to cozy up near the coastline for an elixir with Mother Nature.



Unfortunately for those who identify with a Mission state of mind, the idea of rubbing elbows with hordes of Coors Light-chugging Ohio State alums with deep v-necks and picture-perfect fist pumps can be frightening at best, leaving the Marina a rather uncertain prospect. But believe it or not, the northernmost sector of town can be rather enjoyable when you know where to go.

So strap on your faux raccoon tail and peddle that fixed-gear pushbike north without worry. Even in a sea of Four Loko and spray tans — well hey, uncharted waters aren't always easy to navigate, but once you've had an opportunity to engage in a few exploratory voyages, you just might find yourself the Captain James Cook of the 94123.

MARENGO ON UNION

Circumvent the inebriated swashbucklers at downstairs neighbor Bar None — once safely inside the *Mad Men* cocktail milieu of Marengo, you'll experience the dashing side of the Marina you never knew existed.

Hustle past Marengo's bustling front of the house and proceed directly to the caboose for moonshine that stands nose-to-nose with the coolest cocktail kids on campus. With creations like the refreshing BLT (Bulleit bourbon, lime, tonic), the heavy-handed Rye Hound (think greyhound, but loaded with the brown stuff), and enough fermented grain mash to put hair on the chest of a Jonas Brother, you've got yourself a recipe for fun that would put a glimmer in the bloodshot eye of Charles Bukowski.

If you have an appetite, pair your Kentucky straight with all-beef sliders hailing from farms no more than 150 miles away in any direction, and add a hefty dose of bacon — you know everything tastes better with cured, crispy back fat.
1980 Union, SF. (415) 441-2575
www.marengoonunion.com

DELAROSA

The younger sibling of the Mission's Beretta and the Castro's Starbelly, Delarosa brings a much-needed kick to the groin of this cutesy Marina thoroughfare. Combining the bold flavors of Roman cuisine with a top-notch wine and cocktail program, it's an impressive little nook with a convivial clientele, devoid of the typical creatures responsible for the generally regrettable neighborhood stereotype.

While not dark and brooding like its Valencia counterpart, Delarosa's brightly colored interior houses some seriously well crafted libations, like the signature Agricole Mule (Agricole rum, lime, ginger, mint, soda) and a diverse beer lineup assembled by a real-life beer sommelier. Red ales like the Duchesse de Bourgogne, German offerings like the Köstritzer Schwarzbier, and plenty of domestic pours have got your beer bases covered.

Speaking of bases, Giants closer Brian Wilson is a regular at Delarosa. Clearly a meathead in his own right, but I can't say I wouldn't love running into that bearded mug.
2175 Chestnut, SF. (415) 673-7100
www.delarosasf.com

BLACK MAGIC VOODOO LOUNGE

Damn near Russian Hill, you'll have no problem settling into Black Magic. Channeling the spirit of classic New Orleans, this minuscule watering hole is ripe for the picking if you're craving a southern change of pace — without having to dodge incoming plastic beads flung from the hands of skeevy Peeping Toms, or enduring the painful humidity of the Bayou.

Among a litany of flea market curiosities littered throughout the space, you can enjoy authentic NOLA bloody marys and Abita, the official beer of the Big Easy. You haven't lived until you've downed a pint of this fab amber ale. It just tastes so good when it hits your lips!
1400 Lombard, SF. (415) 931-8711,
Facebook: Black Magic Voodoo Lounge

The raffish Ruggy Joesten is senior community manager at Yelp.com.


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WED 4/13
8P OMG! KARAOKE $NO
9P STRUTTER- DEEJAY ANDRE (ELECTRO/ BOOTY-BASS/ DUB STEP/ HIP-HOP) $3

THU 4/14
7P LIVE MUSIC WITH INSTRUMENTAL DYNAMIC DUO MENTAL 99 NO$/FRONT ROOM
8P LITTLE MERCURY, EXIT WONDERLAND, CURLY (ROCK / INDIE) $5
9P DJ BOOTYKLAP PRESENTS MONSOON SEASON (WORLD) NO$

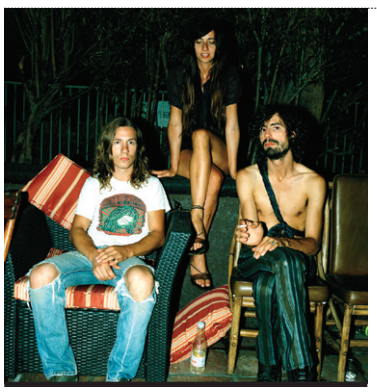
FRI 4/15
5:30P FREE OYSTERS ON THE HALF SHELL
6P-2A DJ'S CARMEN & MIRANDAS FRUIT STAND (FUNK/DISCO/POP) NO$
7:30P RED HOTS BURLESQUE
9P NIGHT CALL, PURPLE RHINESTONE EAGLE, BAD DREAM (PSYCH / SPIRITUAL) $5

SAT 4/16
9P HIP HOP AGAINST HATE $5-10

SUN 4/17
4P SALSA SUNDAYS W/ ANDY Y CALLAO!

MON 4/18
DOLLAR DAYS $1 PABST/ $2 WELL
9P RADICAL VINYL - DJ'S SPIN FUNK+HIPHOP, OLDIES+PUNK! NO$

TUE 4/19
7P GRROMING THE CROW, SCOTT GAGNER (INDIE / AMERICANA) FREE



New groovers Entrance Band play Slim's Fri/15.
PHOTO BY BRIAN PESCADOR

Music listings are compiled by Cheryl Eddy. Since club life is unpredictable, it's a good idea to call ahead to confirm bookings and hours. Prices are listed when provided to us. Submit items for the listings at listings@sfbg.com. For further information on how to submit items for the listings, see Picks.

WEDNESDAY 13

ROCK/BLUES/HIP-HOP

Broken Social Scene, Gord Downie Warfield. 8pm, $27.
Francis and the Lights, Oh Land, Sunday Ghost Café Du Nord. 9:30pm, $15.
Girls in Trouble, Jascha vs. Jascha Viracocha, 998 Valencia, SF; www.viracochasf.com. 8pm, $5-10.
Hammerlock, Scheisse Minnelli, Seven Crowns, Lecherous Gaze Thee Parkside. 8pm, $6.
Black Joe Lewis and the Honeybears, Those Darlins Independent. 8pm, $18.
Lightning Bolt, Tits, High Castle Rickshaw Stop. 8pm, $12.
Majesty, Sweet Chariot, Tarantula Tango Knockout. 9pm, $6.
Curtis Peoples, Keaton Simons, Whitney Nichols Hotel Utah. 8pm, $10.
Porch, Bone Dweller Hemlock Tavern. 9pm, $6.
Rural Alberta Advantage, Lord Huron, Birdmonster Bottom of the Hill. 9pm, $14.
Chelsea TK and the Tzigane Society, Parlour Suite, Starfish in the Clouds, Uni and Her Ukelele, DJ Neil Martinson Elbo Room. 9pm, $7.
Yacht, Bobby Birdman Bimbo's 365 Club. 8pm, $20.

DANCE CLUBS

Booty Call Q-Bar, 456 Castro, SF; www.bootycallwednesdays.com. 9pm. Juanita Moore hosts this dance party, featuring DJ Robot Hustle.
Buena Onda Little Baobab, 3388 19th St., SF; (415) 643-3558. 10pm, $3. Soul, funk, swing, and rare grooves with residents Dr. Musco and DJB.
Cannonball Beauty Bar. 10pm, free. Rock, indie, and nu-disco with DJ White Mike.
Mod vs. Rocker Make-Out Room. 10pm, free. DJs all night spinning 60s pop; come at 7:30 p.m. (cover $7) for a live concert with Bond Girl and 10 ft. 5.
No Room For Squares Som., 2925 16th St, SF; (415) 558-8521. 6-10pm, free. DJ Afrodite Shake spins jazz for happy hour.
Obey the Kitty Vessel. 10pm, $10. With a Ladytron DJ set.
Respect Wednesdays End Up. 10pm, $5. Rotating DJs Daddy Rolo, Young Fyah, Irie Dole, I-Vier, Sake One, Serg, and more spinning reggae, dancehall, roots, lovers rock, and mash ups.
Strutter El Rio. 9pm, $3. DeeJay Andre spins electro, booty bass, hip-hop, and more for lesbians and friends.
"When I Was a Youth: Big Up Magazine Issue Release" Mezzanine. 9pm, $10. With Breakage, Goth Trad, and a screening of the documentary *Bassweight*.

THURSDAY 14

ROCK/BLUES/HIP-HOP

Cults, Magic Kids, White Arrows Independent. 8pm, $13.
Cute Lepers, Re-Volts, Complaints, Lydia and the Projects Thee Parkside. 9pm, $10.
Delorean, Water Borders Slim's. 9pm, $21.
"Eddie Dane Memorial" DNA Lounge. 9pm, $5 suggested donation. With Hi-Rhythm Hustlers and burlesque performances.
Ellie Goulding, Knocks Rickshaw Stop. 9pm, $13.
Joy Formidable, Lonely Forest Bottom of the Hill. 8:30pm, $12.
Lake, AgesandAges, Michael Beach Hemlock Tavern. 9pm, $8.
Little Mercury, Exit Wonderland, Curly El Rio. 8pm, $5.
Vonda Shephard Yoshi's San Francisco. 8pm, $25.
Tomihara, My Second Surprise, Haberdasher Red Devil Lounge. 8pm, $6.
Two Door Cinema Club, Globes, Work Drugs Fillmore. 8pm, $20.
Matt Wertz, Ben Rector Swedish American Hall (upstairs from Café Du Nord). 8pm, $15.

JAZZ/NEW MUSIC

Zach Hash Revolution Café, 3248 22nd St, SF; (415) 642-0474. 8:30pm, free.
Organsm featuring Jim Gunderson and "Tender" Tim Shea Bollyhood Café. 6:30-9pm, free.
Ken Sealy Rite Spot, 2099 Folsom, SF; www.ritespotcafe.net. 9pm, free.
SF Jazz Hotplate Series Amnesia. 9pm.
Scott Sier Café Royale, 800 Post, SF; (415) 641-6033. 8pm, free.
Stompy Jones Top of the Mark. 7:30pm, $10.

FOLK/WORLD/COUNTRY

Meredith Axelrod 50 Mason Social House, 50 Mason, SF; www.50masonsocialhouse.com. 9pm, free.
Bay Island Ramblers Atlas Café. 8-10pm, free.
Amy Obienski Mama Art Café, 4754 Mission, SF; www.mamasf.com. 8pm, free.
Yeye Suárez Red Poppy Art House. 7pm, $12-15.
"Twang! Honky Tonk" Fiddler's Green, 1330 Columbus, SF; www.twanghonkytonk.com. 5pm.

DANCE CLUBS

Afrolicious Elbo Room. 9:30pm, $5. DJs Pleasuremaker and Señor Oz spin Afrobeat, tropicália, electro, samba, and funk.
CakeMIX SF Wish, 1539 Folsom, SF; www.wishsf.com. 10pm, free. DJ Carey Kopp spinning funk, soul, and hip hop.
Caribbean Connection Little Baobab, 3388 19th St, SF; (415) 643-3558. 10pm, $3. DJ Stevie B and guests spin reggae, soca, zouk, reggaetón, and more.
Culture Corner Koko Cocktails, 1060 Geary, SF; www.kokococktails.com. 10pm, free. Roots reggae, dub, rocksteady, and classic dancehall with DJ Tomas, Yusuke, Vinnie Esparza, and Basshaka and ILWF.
Drop the Pressure Underground SF. 6-10pm, free. Electro, house, and datafunk highlight this weekly happy hour.
Electric Feel Lookout, 2600 16th St, SF; www.fringesf.com. 9pm, $2. Indie music video dance party with subOctave and Blondie K.
80s Night Cat Club. 9pm, $6 (free before 9:30pm). Two dance floors bumpin' with the best of 80s mainstream and underground with Dangerous Dan, Skip, Low Life, and guests. This week's theme is Duran Duran; come dressed as a member of the band and get in free before 11pm.
Guilty Pleasures Gestalt, 3159 16th St, SF; (415) 560-0137. 9:30pm, free. DJ TophZilla, Rob Metal, DJ Stef, and Disco-D spin punk, metal, electro-funk, and 80s.
Jivin' Dirty Disco Butter, 354 11th St., SF; (415) 863-5964. 8pm, free. With DJs spinning disco, funk, and classics.
Kissing Booth Make-Out Room. 9pm, free. DJs Jory, Commodore 69, and more spinning indie dance, disco, 80's, and electro.
Mestiza Bollywood Café, 3376 19th St, SF; (415) 970-0362. 10pm, free. Showcasing progressive Latin and global beats with DJ Juan Data.
Motion Sickness Vertigo, 1160 Polk, SF; (415) 674-1278. 10pm, free. Genre-bending dance party with DJs Sneaky P, Public Frenemy, and D_Ro Cyclist.
1984 Mighty. 9pm, $2. The long-running New Wave and 80s party has a new venue, featuring video DJs Mark Andrus, Don Lynch, and celebrity guests.
Peaches Skylark, 10pm, free. With an all female DJ line up featuring Deeandroid, Lady Fingaz, That Girl, and Umami spinning hip hop.
Thursday Special Tralala Revolution Café, 3248 22nd St, SF; (415) 642-0474. 5pm, free. Downtempo, hip-hop, and freestyle beats by Dr. Musco and Unbroken Circle MCs.



FRIDAY 15

ROCK/BLUES/HIP-HOP

Blank Tapes, Little Wings, Kacey Johansing, Rad Cloud Great American Music Hall. 8:30pm, $13.
Burmese, CCR Headcleaner, Crib Death Hemlock Tavern. 9:30pm, $7.
"Cheerleader Graduation Party" Rickshaw Stop. 8pm, $10. With Cock-Ts, Devil-Ettes, Boner Jams, and Six Million Dollar Band.
Entrance Band, Rachel Fannan, Nick Waterhouse, Allah Las, DJ Selections by KC Bull Slim's. 9pm, $13.
Gr'ups, Swann Danger, Street Eaters, Hounds and Harlots Thee Parkside. 9pm, $8.
Katdelic, DJ K-Os Boom Boom Room. 9:30pm, $15.
Naked Fiction Amnesia. 7pm.
Night Call, Purple Rhinestone Eagle, Bad Dream El Rio. 9pm, $5.
Nodzzz, Art Museums, Gun Outfit Bottom of the Hill. 10pm, $10.
Residents Bimbo's 365 Club. 9pm, $30.
Raphael Saadiq, Quadron Regency Ballroom. 9pm, $39.50-49.50.
Scissor Sisters, Oh Land Warfield. 9pm, $37.
Upsets 50 Mason Social House, 50 Mason, SF; www.50masonsocialhouse.com. 9pm, free.

JAZZ/NEW MUSIC

Emily Anne Revolution Café, 3248 22nd St, SF; (415) 642-0474. 9pm, free.
"B3 Bash" Herbst Theatre, 401 Van Ness, SF; www.sfjazz.org. 8pm, $25-60. With Dr. Lonnie Smith and Barbara Dennerlein Trio.
Black Market Jazz Orchestra Top of the Mark. 9pm, $10.
Chelle! and friends Red Poppy Art House. 8pm, $12-15.
Melees, Ken Sealy Rite Spot, 2099 Folsom, SF; www.ritespotcafe.net. 9pm, free.
Maceo Parker Yoshi's San Francisco. 8 and 10pm, $20-30.

FOLK/WORLD/COUNTRY

Deke Dickerson, B-Stars, Golddigger Elbo Room. 9pm, $13.
Amjad Ali Khan Palace of Fine Arts, 3301 Lyon, SF; www.ciis.edu/publicprograms. 8pm, $25-100.
Amy Obienski Velo Rouge Café, 798 Arguello, SF; www.velorougecafe.com. 7pm, free.
Pine Box Boys, Hubba Hubba Revue, Possum and Lester Café Du Nord. 9:30pm, $14.
Shakulintang Rancho Parnassus, 505 Minna, SF; www.ranchoparnassus.com. 8pm, $10-15.

DANCE CLUBS

Afro Bao Little Baobab, 3388 19th St, SF; (415) 643-3558. 10pm, $5. Afro and world music with rotating DJs including Stepwise, Steve, Claude, Santero, and Elembe.
Chase and Status, 2cents, Lukeino, Kuze DNA Lounge. 10pm, $20.
DJ Momentum Medjool, 2522 Mission, SF; www.medjoolsf.com. 10:30pm, $10.
DJ What's His Fuck Riptide. 9pm, free. Old-school punk and other gems.
Dirty Rotten Dance Party Madrone Art Bar. 9pm, $5. With DJs Morale, Kap10 Harris, and Shane King spinning electro, bootybass, crunk, swampy breaks, hyphy, rap, and party classics.
Exhale, Fridays Project One Gallery, 251 Rhode Island, SF; (415) 465-2129. 5pm, $5. Happy hour with art, fine food, and music with Vin Sol, King Most, DJ Centipede, and Shane King.
Fubar Fridays Butter, 354 11th St., SF; (415) 863-5964. 6pm, $5. With DJs spinning retro mashup remixes.
Good Life Fridays Apartment 24, 440 Broadway, SF; (415) 989-3434. 10pm, $10. With DJ Brian spinning hip hop, mashups, and top 40.
Mary Anne Hobbs 1015 Folsom. 10pm, $15. With Joy Orbison, Kode9, Lorn, Gonja Sufi, and more.
Hot Chocolate Milk. 9pm, $5. With DJs Big Fat Frog, Chardmo, DuseRock, and more spinning old and new school funk.
Radioactivity 222 Hyde, SF; (415) 440-0222. 6pm. Synth sounds of the cold war era.
Rockabilly Fridays Jay N Bee Club, 2736 20th St, SF; (415) 824-4190. 9pm, free. With DJs Rockin' Raul, Oakie Oran, Sergio Iglesias, and Tanoa "Samoa Boy" spinning 50s and 60s Doo Wop, Rockabilly, Bop, Jive, and more.
Some Thing Stud. 10pm, $7. VivvyAnne Forevermore, Glamamore, and DJ Down-E give you fierce drag shows and afterhours dancing.
Vintage Orson, 508 Fourth St, SF; (415) 777-1508. 5:30-11pm, free. DJ TophOne and guest spin jazzy beats for cocktalians.

SATURDAY 16

ROCK/BLUES/HIP-HOP

All Time Low, Yellowcard, Hey Monday, Summer Set Warfield. 7pm, $27.
Arrival, Luvplanet, Relay Company Showroom, 1000 Van Ness, SF; (415) 346-5597. 8:30pm,

CONTINUES ON PAGE 44 ››

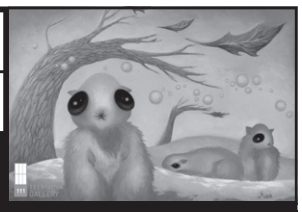
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FRIDAY 04/15
8PM • $20 SOLD OUT!
• Patrick Stump
• Ash Reiter
10:30PM • $20 ADV & DOOR
• Patrick Stump
SATURDAY 04/16
9PM • $8 ADV & $10 DOOR
Anthony Bellos "Stella" EP release concert
• Anthony Bello
• The Courtney Janes
• The Danger Babes
SUNDAY 04/17
8PM • $8 ADV & DOOR
• Sweetness and The Fist City Swingers
• The Patsychords
• Hotsy Totsy and the Hillbilly Jazzbos
MONDAY 04/18
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• Open mic with JJ Schultz
LIVE MUSIC
TUESDAY 04/19
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• Chairs Missing
• Ash Reiter
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THU 4/14 9:30PM $5 — AFRO-TROPI-ELECTRIC-SAMBA-FUNK AFROLICIOUS WITH DJS/HOSTS: PLEASUREMAKER SENOR OZ
FRI 4/15 9PM $10/$13 — SPIRIT VIBRATIONS PRESENTS DEKE DICKERSON B-STARS GOLDDIGGER
SAT 4/16 10PM $10 — SPINNING '60S SOUL 45'S SATURDAY NIGHT SOUL PARTY WITH DJS LUCKY, PAUL PAUL, PHENGREN OSWALD $5 DISCOUNT IN SEMI-FORMAL ATTIRE
SUN 4/17 9PM $6 — DUB MISSION PRESENTS THE BEST IN DUB, DUBSTEP, ROOTS & DANCEHALL W/ DJ SEP VINNIE ESPARZA (TREAT EM RIGHT), AND GUEST DJ RIPLEY (SURYA DUB/HAVOCSOUND)
MON 4/18 9PM $ SLIDING SCALE — A BENEFIT FOR JAPAN'S TSUNAMI VICTIMS ONE WAY STATION CALIFIA, SONGS FOR SNAKES $2 DRINK SPECIALS
TUE 4/19 9PM $7 — ELBO ROOM PRESENTS BRAZILIAN WAX: LIVE PERFORMANCE FROM RAZTERIA PLUS DJS CARIOCA & P-SHOT
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SAT/16

ROCK/BLUES/HIP-HOP

CONT››

$12-15.
Crazy Alligators Revolution Café, 3248 22nd St, SF; (415) 642-0474. 9pm, free.
Forrest Day, Bayonics, Ghost and the City Great American Music Hall. 9pm, $14.
Druglords of the Avenues, Fracas, Street Justice Bender's, 806 S. Van Ness, SF; www.bendersbar.com. 9:30pm, $5.
Duran Duran Fillmore. 9pm, $57.50.
Full on Flyhead, Lavish Green, Ben Benkert Band, Scholar and the Melting Pot Slim's. 9pm, $14.
Heavy Liquid, Tempermentals Thee Parkside. 3pm, free.
Maserati, Kenseth Thibideau, Glaciers Hemlock Tavern. 9:30pm, $10.
OONA, Super Adventure Club, Dogcatcher Bottom of the Hill. 10pm, $10.
Orgone, Quinn Deveaux and the Blue Beat Review Independent. 9pm, $16.
Residents Bimbo's 365 Club. 9pm, $30.
Stymie and the Pimp Jones Love Orchestra Café Du Nord. 9pm, $15-25.

JAZZ/NEW MUSIC

Billy White Quintet West Red Poppy Art House. 8pm, $12-20.
JP and the Rhythm Chasers, Petunia and the Vipers Verdi Club, 2424 Mariposa, SF; www.old-timey.net. 8pm, $15.
Maceo Parker Yoshi's San Francisco. 8 and 10pm, $30.
Proverb Trio with Dafnis Prieto, Kokyai, and Jason Lindner Swedish American Hall (upstairs from Café Du Nord). 8pm, $30.

FOLK/WORLD/COUNTRY

Culann's Hounds, Lucia Comnes St. Cyprian's Church, 2097 Turk, SF; www.noevalleymusic-series.com. 8pm, $20.
Octomutt, Lily Taylor Rite Spot, 2099 Folsom, SF; www.ritespotcafe.net. 9pm.
Craig Ventresco and Meredith Axelrod Atlas Café. 4pm, free.

DANCE CLUBS

Afro Bao Little Baobab, 3388 19th St, SF; (415) 643-3558. 10pm, $5. Afro and world music with rotating DJs including Stepwise, Steve, Claude, Santero, and Elembe.
Cock Fight Underground SF. 9pm, $7. Gay locker room antics galore with electro-spinning DJ Earworm, MyKill, and Dcnstrct.
Bootie SF: Bootiechella DNA Lounge. 9pm, $8-15. Coachella artists get mashed up by Adrian and Mysterious D, and more.
DJ Nik Medjool, 2522 Mission, SF; www.medjoolsf.com. 10:30pm, $10.
Fringe Madrone Art Bar. 9pm, $5. Indie music video dance party with DJ Blondie K and subOctave bringing the best of Coachella to SF.
Full House Gravity, 3505 Scott, SF; (415) 776-1928. 9pm, $10. With DJs Roost Uno and Pony P spinning dirty hip hop.
HYP Club Eight, 1151 Folsom, SF; www.eightsf.com. 10pm, free. Gay and lesbian hip-hop party, featuring DJs spinning the newest in the top 40s hip hop and hyphy.
Prince vs. Michael Madrone Art Bar. 8pm, $5. With DJs Dave Paul and Jeff Harris battling it out on the turntables with album cuts, remixes, rare tracks, and classics.
Saturday Night Soul Party Elbo Room. 10pm, $10. Sixties soul with DJs Lucky, Phengren Oswald, and Paul Paul.
Spirit Fingers Sessions 330 Ritch. 9pm, free. With DJ Morse Code and live guest performances.

SUNDAY 17

ROCK/BLUES/HIP-HOP

"Bands for the Rising Sun: Benefit for Japan Tsumani Quake Relief" Maggie McGarry's, 1353 Grant, SF; bandsfortherisingsun@gmail.com. 2-9pm, donations accepted. With Dyno Cats, Deepest Purple, Project Gojira, and more.
"Battle of the Bands" DNA Lounge. 5:30pm, $12. With Glorious Birds, Style Like Revelators, and more.
Black Wizard Hemlock Tavern. 9pm, $6.
Foxtails Brigade, Rachel Fannan Swedish American Hall (upstairs from Café Du Nord). 8pm, $15.
Hauschka, Magik Magik Orchestra Great American Music Hall. 8pm, $18.
Goh Nakamura, Come Gather Round Us, Yea-Ming Café Du Nord. 8pm, $10.
Vostok-Zapad Rickshaw Stop. 7pm, $25.
Wire Slim's. 9pm, $21.

JAZZ/NEW MUSIC

"Bruno's/Wayne Niethold Tribute" Public Works, 161 Erie, SF; www.publicsf.com. 4-10pm,

CONTINUES ON PAGE 46 ››









FRIDAY APRIL 22 - SUNDAY MAY 1, 2011

bay area national dance week

ALL DANCE
ALL FREE
ALL WEEK

dancersgroup

10 DAYS of over 400 free events



JOIN more than 650 artists and organizations



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PICTURED: (from left to right) Kathy Mata Ballet, photo by Christine Fu; Dance Generators, photo by Chris Golden; Hot Pink Feathers, photo by Michelle Cañalita; China Dance Theater, photo by RJ Muna; ODC and Rhythm & Motion, photo by Margo Moritz.

This project and Dancers' Group are funded by: Bernard Osher Foundation, Delta Dental of California, Fleishhacker Foundation, Grants for the Arts, James Irvine Foundation, J.B. Berland Foundation, Kenneth Rainin Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, San Francisco Arts Commission, San Francisco Foundation, Walter & Elise Haas Fund, William & Flora Hewlett Foundation, and the Zellerbach Family Foundation.

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Friday, April 22 at 12noon
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To kick off this fabulous 10-day festival come join *One Dance* at noon in San Francisco's Union Square. *One Dance* is an all-inclusive flash mob of dancers and non-dancers, schools, companies, and artists, all dancing in unison to the same piece of music.

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SUN/17

JAZZ/NEW MUSIC

CONT››

$15-50. With DJ Chase Gowdy, Todd Sickafoose Group, Graham Connah's Sour Note Seven, Scott Amendola Quartet, and more.
Jennifer Bryce and Josh Workman Bliss Bar, 4026 24th St., SF; www.blissbarsf.com. 4:30pm, $10.
Ellis Marsalis Herbst Theatre, 401 Van Ness, SF; www.sfjazz.org. 7pm, $25-65.
Tom Lander Duo Medjool, 2522 Mission, SF; www.medjoolsf.com. 6-9pm, free.

DANCE CLUBS

Batcave Cat Club. 10pm, $5. Death rock, goth, and post-punk with Steeplerot Necromos and c_death.
Chocolate Sundays Beauty Bar. 9pm. With DJs 4AM and Automatic Transmission, plus a drunken spelling bee.
Dub Mission Elbo Room. 9pm, $6. Dub, roots, and classic dancehall with DJ Sep, Vinnie Esparza, and guest DJ Ripley.
Honey Soundsystem Paradise Lounge. 8pm-2am. "Dance floor for dancers – sound system for lovers." Got that?
La Pachanga Blue Macaw, 2565 Mission, SF; www.thebluemacawsf.com. 6pm, $10. Salsa dance party with live Afro-Cuban salsa bands.

MONDAY 18

ROCK/BLUES/HIP-HOP

!!! Independent. 9pm, $20.
New Pornographers, Menomena Regency Ballroom. 8pm, $32.
One Way Station, Califia, Songs for Snakes Elbo Room. 9pm.
Spiral Bombs, Narooma, Hazel's Wart El Rio. 7pm, $5.
Tame Impala, Yuck Fillmore. 8pm, $20.

DANCE CLUBS

Death Guild DNA Lounge. 9:30pm, $3-5. Gothic, industrial, and synthpop with Joe Radio, Decay, and Melting Girl.
Sausage Party Rosamunde Sausage Grill, 2832 Mission, SF; (415) 970-9015. 6:30-9:30pm, free. DJ Dandy Dixon spins vintage rock, R&B, global beats, funk, and disco at this happy hour sausage-shack gig.

TUESDAY 19

ROCK/BLUES/HIP-HOP

Marcia Ball Yoshi's San Francisco. 8pm, $20.
"Beyond the Music Label Series" Boom Boom Room. 6-9pm, free. With Blind Willies.
Grooming the Crow, Scott Gagner El Rio. 7pm, free.
Janet Jackson Bill Graham Civic Auditorium, 99 Grove, SF; www.ticketmaster.com. 8pm, $49.50-149.50.
Pains of Being Pure at Heart Amoeba, 1855 Haight, SF; www.amoeba.com. 6pm, free.
Pains of Being Pure at Heart, Twin Shadow, Catwalk Great American Music Hall. 8pm, $17.
Rubber O Cement, Dental Work, Shortwave Surfers, Terror Apart Hemlock Tavern. 9pm, $6.

DANCE CLUBS

Boomtown Little Baobab, 3388 19th St, SF; www.bissapbaobab.com. 9pm, free. DJ Mundi spins roots, ragga, dancehall, and more.
Brazilian Wax Elbo Room. 9pm, $7. Forro and samba with Razteria, DJ Carioca, and DJ P-Shot.
SFBG

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MC Yogi
Soul Majestic
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Korean 3 (Katie Chan) sets herself on fire as Korean American (Cindy Im) watches in Crowded Fire's *Songs of the Dragons Flying to Heaven*. | PHOTO BY DAVE NOWAKOWSKI

Stage listings are compiled by Guardian staff. Performance times may change; call venues to confirm. Reviewers are Robert Avila, Rita Felciano, and Nicole Gluckstern. Submit items for the listings at listings@sfbg.com. For further information on how to submit items for the listings, see Picks. For complete listings, see www.sfbg.com.

THEATER

OPENING

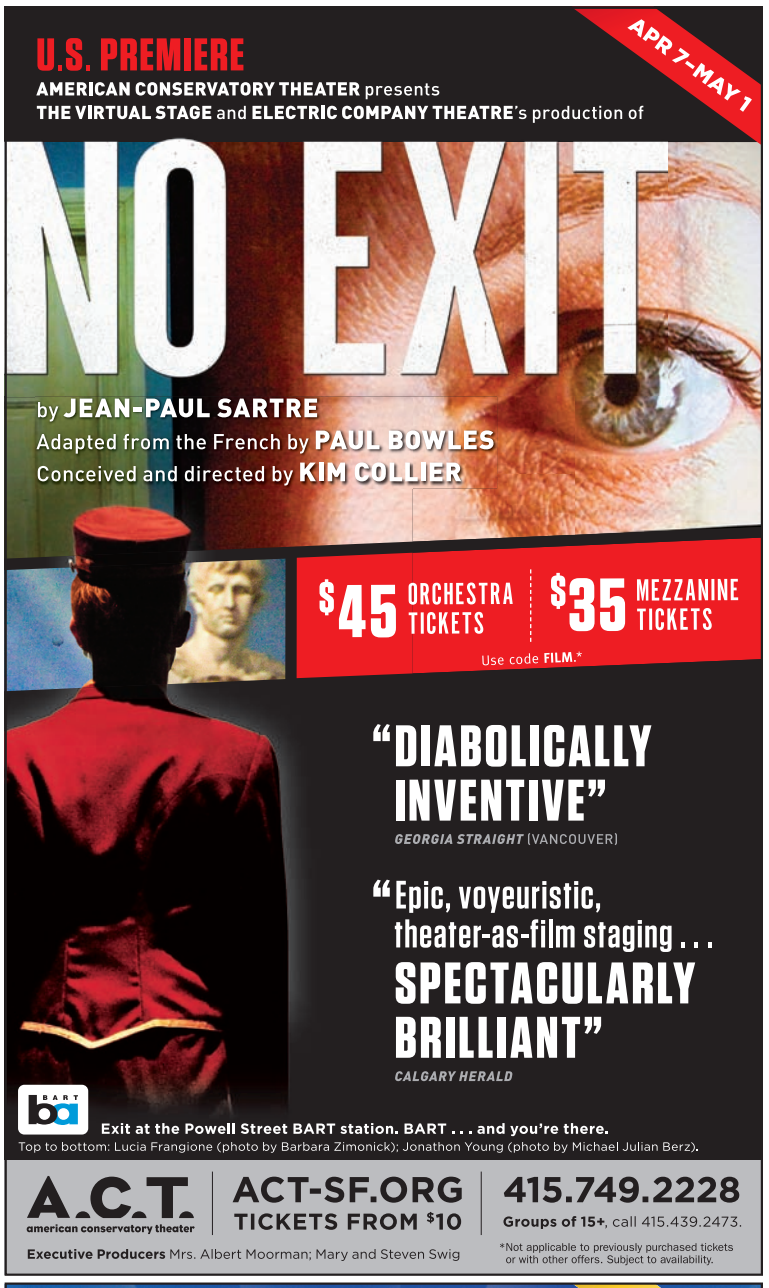
Cordelia NOHspace, 2840 Mariposa; (800) 838-3006, www.brownpapertickets.com. $18-20. Previews Tues/19, 7pm. Opens April 20, 7pm. Wed-Thurs, 7pm; Fri-Sat, 8pm. Through May 7. Theatre of Yugen presents world premiere of an abstraction of Shakespeare's *King Lear*.

ONGOING

The Busy World is Hushed New Conservatory Theatre Center, 25 Van Ness; 861-8972, www.nctcsf,org. $24-40. Wed-Sat, 8pm; Sun, 2pm. Through May 1. New Conservatory Theatre Center presents the world premiere of a play by Keith Bunin.
Collected Stories Stage Werx, 533 Sutter; Z(800) 838-3006, www.brownpapertickets.com. $20-25. Fri-Sat, 8pm (alos April 24 2pm). Through May 7. Stage Werx presents David Margulies' drama about art, ethics, and betrayal.
» **40 Pounds in 12 Weeks** The Marsh, Studio Theater, 1074 Valencia; (800) 838-3006, www.themarsh.org. $15-35. Call for dates and times. Through April 30. Pidge Meade's one-woman show extends its successful run.
Free Theater Community Room, Notre Dame Senior Plaza, 347 Dolores; 864-4467. Free. Fri, 7:30pm; Sat-Sun, 3pm. Through April 17. The 16th Street Players present four comic plays.
» **Geezer** Marsh, 1062 Valencia; (800) 838-3006, www.themarsh.org. $20-50. Thurs, 8pm; Sat, 5pm; Sun, 3pm. Through May 1. The Marsh presents a new solo show about aging and mortality by Geoff Hoyle.
Into the Clear Blue Sky Phoenix Theater, 414 Mason; 913-7272, www.sleepwalkerstheatre.com. $15-17. Thurs-Sat, 8pm. Through April 30. Sleepwalkers Theatre presents the second production in a three-part apocalypse series.
KML Reboots Traveling Jewish Theater, 470 Floriad; www.killingmylobster.com. $10-20. Thurs-fri, 8pm; Sat, 7 and 10pm; Sun, 7pm. Through April 24. The sketch comedians present a new show about the pleasures and pains of technology.
M. Butterfly Gough Street Playhouse, 1620 Gough; (510) 207-5774, www.custommade.org. $20-28. Thurs-Sat, 8pm. Through April 30. Custom Made Theatre presents David Henry Hwang's award-winning play.
» **Obscura: A Magic Play** Exit Studio, 156 Eddy; 673-3847, www.sffringe.org. $20-25. Fri-Sat, 8pm. Through Sat/16. Christian Cagigal is back with the magical. Over the last several years, the popular Bay Area writer/performer has developed a series of dramatically structured magic shows (the most recent being the autobiographical Now and at the Hour), each a different attempt at blending expert prestidigitation with elements of narrative theater. Tightly focused and deliberately small-scale, *Obscura* is in some ways his most successful foray yet. In the Exit Theater's new studio space, Cagigal (with occasional help from his audience) unfolds a series of sly Gothic stories combined with extremely clever, sometimes dementedly playful card and coin tricks—the majority a collection of favorite pieces from other magicians—all played out on a delicately managed little table augmented by overhead projection (a set-up that offers various visual opportunities, including use of title cards). Rapid-fire narration (occasionally indistinct but generally articulate) and a laid back, slightly mischievous demeanor combine here with consummate skill in an intimate and very enjoyable evening of crafty little tales. If there's an overarching theme, it probably has something to do with human folly, the persistence of mystery, and the devil, but then any good fable involving a deck of cards probably should. (Avila)
The Real Americans The Marsh MainStage, 1062 Valencia; 282-3055, www.themarsh.org. $25-35. Fri, 8pm; Sat, 8:30pm. Through April 30. Dan Hoyle's hit show returns for another engagement.
Sea Turtles Exit Theater, 156 Eddy; www.generationtheatre.com. $15-25. Fri-Sat, 8pm; Sun, 3pm (also April 28, 8pm). Through April 30. GenerationTheatre presents an original play by David Valayre.
Secret Identity Crisis SF Playhouse, Stage 2, 533 Sutter; 869-5384, www.un-scripted.com. $10-20. Thurs-Sat, 8pm (no show may 7). Through May 14. Un-Scripted Theater Company presents a story about unmasked heroes.
» **Songs of the Dragons Flying to Heaven** The Thick House, 1695 18th St; 255-8746, www.asianamericantheatre.org, www.crowdedfire.org. $15-25. Call for dates and times. Through Sat/16. "They have no idea what the fuck we're doing," observes one of the nameless "Korean" characters in Young Jean Lee's *Songs of the Dragons Flying to Heaven*. In rapid succession the audience has witnessed a video clip of the playwright being slapped repeatedly in the face, a westernized Korean woman (Cindy Im) ranting about her "retarded monkey" parents and minority rage yet promising her Grandmother that she'll give Jesus a whirl, bafflingly banal interactions between two "white" people (Alexis Papedo and Josh Schell) struggling with their floundering romance, and cartoonish interludes of exaggerated sex, consumerism, and violence enacted by three gaudily-dressed Korean women (Mimu Tsujimura, Lily Tung Crystal, Katie Chan)—none of whom are actually played by Koreans. It's a play you have to surrender yourself to, a roller-coaster ride of sharp curves and nausea-inducing plunges (especially twisted is the gross-out contest of suicide methods in which each character takes a turn at dying in an unimaginably gruesome yet hilarious manner). Oddly, the piece ends on a rather lackluster note, with the two "white" people exploring the mutual contempt they pretend is love, which might be the playwright's method of showing that white people can ruin anything without half trying, but the ride before their dead end is a thrilling one. (Gluckstern)
A Streetcar Named Desire Actors Theatre, 855 Bush; 345-1287, www.actorstheatresf.org. $26-38. Wed-Sat, 8pm. Through June 4. Actors Theatre of San Francisco presents the Tennessee Williams tale.
Talking With Angels Royce Gallery, 2901 Mariposa; (800) 838-3006, www.brownpapertickets.com. $21-35. Thurs-Sat, 8pm. Through May 21. A play by Shelley Mitchell set in Nazi-occupied Hungary.
Tape The Dark room, 2263 Mission; www.darkroomsf.com. $10-20. Fri-Sat, 8pm (also Sat/16, 10pm). Through April 23. The 4th Mirror presents a production of the play by Stephen Belber.
Twelfth Night African American Art & Culture Complex, 762 Fulton; (800) 838-3006, www.African-AmericanShakes.org. $15-35. Sat, 8pm; Sun, 3pm (no performance April 24). Through May 1. African-American Shakespeare Company presents a jazzy interpretation of the Bard.
» **Wirehead** SF Playhouse, 533 Sutter; 677-9596, www.sfplayhouse.org. $30-50. Tues-Wed, 7pm; Thurs-Fri, 8pm; Sat, 3and 8pm. Through April 23. Perfectionism's ruthless class dimensions come to the fore in SF Playhouse's smart, fun, and sharply staged Bay Area premiere about the super-smart posthumans of the near future, and the rest of us. A shady China-based conglomerate with a name that sounds like Sin-Tell sells a scintillating if dangerous procedure for those already well connected: a hardwire boost to the neural circuitry that gives the recipient more than an edge on the competition and something just shy of godlike powers. Two friends and colleagues in a banking firm (Craig Marker and Gabriel Marin) and their variously class-marked but equally ambitious girlfriends (Lauren Grace and Madeleine H.D. Brown) are all drawn into this cyborgian gold rush, and it gets sticky in more ways than one, as meanwhile a brash local DJ named RIP (Scott Coopwood) raps sardonically over the airwaves about this latest twist in an old game. SF Playhouse's Susi Damilano directs a charismatic cast (including a terrific Cole Alexander Smith in a related series of frenetic roles) in Matt Benjamin and Logan Brown's culture-jamming riposte to tech-mad humanist hogwash about Progress. It gets you thinking. (Avila)

BAY AREA

» **Beardo** Ashby Stage, 1901 Ashby, Berk; (510) 841-6500, www.shotgunplayers.org. $17-26. Thurs-Sat, 8pm; Sun, 5pm. Through April 24. Shotgun Players present a an original songplay about Rasputin.
Eccentricities of a Nightingale Aurora Theatre, 2081 Addison; (510) 843-4822, www.auroratheatre.org. $34-45. Tues, 7pm; Wed-Sat, 8pm; Sun, 2 and 7pm. Through May 8. Aurora Theatre Company presents a Tennessee Williams drama.
Quidam The Cow Palace 2600 Geneva, Daly City; (415) 404-4100; www.cowpalace.com, www.cirquedusoleil.com. $32-115. Call for dates and times. Through Sun/17. In Albert Lamorisse's 1956 short film *The Red Balloon*, a child's love affair with a mischievous toy takes place on the streets of Paris, a rough gray place that weirdly foreshadows the subterranean world inhabited by the mysterious creatures of *Quidam*. Here the silent child toting a giant red balloon is Zoe (Alessandra Gonzalez), who's been spirited away to their underworld from her neglectful, oblivious parents. Her participation in their antics basically amounts to her looking on as acrobats, contortionists, and clowns strut their stuff, in the uninviting, under-populated confines of the Cow Palace, a far from ideal venue for a show that relies so much on audience participation and intimacy. In general the acts involving more performers work better in the cavernous space—an inventive diabolo juggling act, a complicated twenty-person jump rope exhibition, a five-person aerial Spanish Webs ensemble, and a highly-acrobatic fifteen-person Banquine act: synchronized, rapid-fire flinging of bodies to, fro, high, and low without missing a beat or (thankfully) a catch. There is much to admire in Cirque du Soleil's dedication to legitimizing the Circus as a higher art form, but this presentation of *Quidam* aims unfortunately low. (Gluckstern) **SFBG**







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Everyone loves a bouncy house! Bring your family to the Central YMCA's annual Healthy Kids Day carnival and health fair on Sat/16. | PHOTO COURTESY OF SHIH YU-LANG CENTRAL YMCA

On the Cheap listings are compiled by Jackie Andrews. Submit items for the listings at listings@sfbg.com. For further information on how to submit items for the listings, see Picks.

WEDNESDAY 13

Party to save the Dyke March! El Rio, 3158 Mission, SF; www.elriosf.com. 8:30-11:30pm, $3. Strut your stuff at this new dance party – appropriately called "Strutter," featuring DJ Andre, who will be busting out all the right hip-hop stops and a few rock tunes for good measure. The organizers will be donating all of the profits from the night to help the annual Dyke March promenade to take to the streets for another year. Of course, feel free to dig deeper into your pockets and donate even more to help this important San Francisco institution remain visible in the community.
Beatbox how-to Bazaar Cafe, 5927 California, SF; (415) 831-5620, www.howtonight.com. 7pm, free with food and beverage purchase. Another boring day at the office got you down? Maybe the fancy PowerPoint transitions and fonts fail to add the same level of oomph they once had in the past? Maybe it's time to go big and add some live vocal percussion to your presentation. Tonight, you can learn how when the talented Wes Carroll helps you transform your mouth into a human drum machine. He'll get you up and beatboxing like Biz Markie in no time.

THURSDAY 14

Spring into health Marine Mammal Center, 2000 Bunker, Sausalito; www.marinemammalcenter.org. 2-6pm, free. Quit putting off that yearly physical and take advantage of free health screenings all day long at the first ever Sausalito Wellness Fair. Get your blood pressure checked out and get screened for high cholesterol and diabetes – no fasting required for any of these, so feel free to help yourself to the plethora of healthy snacks on hand. Afterward, talk to the experts and create a health action plan, enjoy a relaxing chair massage, collect free health-related giveaways, and even learn about what we have in common with our marine mammal friends.

FRIDAY 15

C. Ryder Cooley performance art Luggage Store Gallery, 1007 Market, SF; www.luggagestoregallery.org. 8pm, $5-10 sliding scale. Come check out this new multimedia exhibit by inter-disciplinary artist C. Ryder Cooley with videos, musical performances, and performances that may or may not fall in to the "other" category. The theme of her show "Ximalia" is extinction, and Cooley, once an active member in the SF art and music scenes, will perform with her usual singing saw and accordion – although these days, she's really more into her six-stringed 'uke – and yes, there will be taxidermy. We hear a be-dazzled dear skull may be involved in some way, so be sure to circle today on your calendar and find out what *that's* all about.

SATURDAY 16

Central YMCA's Healthy Kids Day Shih Yu-Lang Central YMCA, 387 Golden Gate, SF; www.ymcasf.org. 2-8pm, donations encouraged. Calling all parents – take your kids to the YMCA today for an all-day play date! Healthy Kids Day is the nation's largest health-themed day for families, and San Francisco's central YMCA has got a fun-filled carnival planned for you and your brood, featuring games and prizes, performances, exercise demos, health screenings, and (yes!) even a bouncy house! It's never to late to be healthy, active, and connected.

SUNDAY 17

Doggie Easter egg hunt Wag Hotel, 25 14th St., SF; (415) 876-0700, www.waghotels.com. 11am-2:30pm, donations encouraged. Dust off your Easter hats – human and canine alike – and bring your furry friends over to the Wag Hotel to sniff out treat-filled eggs and meet the Easter Bunny himself. Critter-less? That's OK. Stop by anyway and meet adoptable dogs, schmooze with fellow dog-lovers, and ogle the adorable spectacle that is a doggie Easter egg hunt. All donations go directly to the Animal Care and Control of San Francisco.

MONDAY 18

105th anniversary of The Big One Meet at Lotta's Fountain, corner of Kearny, 3rd Street, and Geary, SF.; www.sanfranciscostories.com. 4:30am, free. Whether it's your Monday morning or you're still rocking Sunday night, you won't want to miss this annual San Francisco tradition commemorating the great earthquake and fire of 1906. Since this year's ceremony is dedicated to the Japanese quake victims, San Franciscan Nisei and Sansei will join Ed Lee and others at Lotta's fountain to kick off the event. After 5:11am, which marks the exact moment of the quake, attendees can go to Dolores Park for the annual painting of the fire hydrant that saved the Mission District. Afterward, head over to Lefty O'Doul's at 333 Geary for a Bloody Mary breakfast (sadly, not free) before you inevitably go home and crawl back in to bed. SFBG



***Circo*, a documentary about a family-run circus traveling through rural Mexico, opens Fri/15.** | COURTESY FIRST RUN FEATURES

Film listings are edited by Cheryl Eddy. Reviewers are Kimberly Chun, Michelle Devereaux, Peter Galvin, Max Goldberg, Dennis Harvey, Johnny Ray Huston, Louis Peitzman, Lynn Rapoport, Ben Richardson, and Matt Sussman. For rep house showtimes, see Rep Clock. For first-run showtimes, see Movie Guide at www.sfbg.com. For complete film listings, see www.sfbg.com.

OPENING

An Affirmative Act A lesbian couple fights for their right to stay married in this narrative courtroom drama. (1:33) *Four Star.*

» **Circo** The old notion of "running away with the circus" seldom seemed appealing — conjuring images of following an elephant around with a shovel — and it grows even less so after watching Aaron Schock's warm, touching documentary. The kids here might one day run away *from* the circus. They're born into Grand Circo Mexico, one of four circuses run by the Ponce family, which has been in this business for generations; if they're old enough to walk, they're old enough to perform, and help with the endless setup and breakdown chores. (Presumably child labor laws are an innovation still waiting to happen here.) Touring Mexico's small towns in trucks with a variety of exotic animals, it's a life of labor, with on-the-job training in place of school — arguably not much of a life for child, as current company leader Tino's wife Ivonne (who really did run away with the circus, or rather him, at age 15) increasingly insists. Other family members have split for a normal life, and Tino is caught between loyalty to his parents' ever-struggling business and not wanting to lose the family he's raised himself. This beautifully shot document, scored by Calexico and edited by Mark Becker (of 2005's marvelous *Romantico*), is a disarming look at a lifestyle that feels almost 19th century, and is barely hobbling into the 21st one. (1:15) *Lumiere, Shattuck.* (Harvey)

The Conspirator It may not be your standard legal drama, but *The Conspirator* is a lot more enjoyable when you think of it as an extended episode of *Law & Order*. The film chronicles the trial of Mary Surratt (Robin Wright), the lone woman charged in the conspiracy to assassinate Abraham Lincoln. It's a fascinating story, especially for those who don't know much of the history past John Wilkes Booth. But while the subject matter is compelling, the execution is hit-or-miss. Wright is sympathetic as Surratt, but the usually great James McAvoy is somewhat forgettable in the pivotal role of Frederick Aiken, Surratt's conflicted lawyer. It's hard to say what it is that's missing from *The Conspirator*: the cast — which also includes Evan Rachel Wood and Tom Wilkinson — is great, and this is a story that's long overdue to be told. Still, something is lacking. Could it be the presence of everyone's favorite detective, the late Lennie Briscoe? (2:02) *Embarcadero, Piedmont.* (Peitzman)

Henry's Crime See "Breaking Point." (1:48) *California, Embarcadero.*

Meet Monica Velour Kim Cattrall stars as an aging porn star in this comedy. (1:37)

Rio Jesse Eisenberg and Anne Hathaway lend their voices to this animated bird adventure. (1:32) *Presidio.*

Scre4m It's kinda fun to just look at the cast list and wonder which demi-star will suffer the most hideous death at the hands of ol' Ghostface: Emma Roberts? Adam Brody? Shanae Grimes? (run time not available)

Some Days Are Better Than Others First-time director Matt McCormick doesn't break any new stylistic or thematic ground with his ensemble drama, but *Some Days Are Better Than Others* does boast an interesting bit of stunt casting. Indie rock fans will recognize the Shins' James Mercer as mopey Eli, who drifts between temp jobs trying to earn enough money to go back to school because he hates working so much; fellow musician Carrie Brownstein appears as Katrina, a recently-dumped, reality TV-obsessed dog-shelter worker; her character is the kind of emo thrift-shopper that *Portlandia* would had no trouble poking fun at. Other points on this sad-sack square are a lonely woman ((Renee Roman Nose) who finds an erstwhile cremation urn, and an elderly man (David Wodehouse) obsessed with the kaleidoscope-like patterns he captures while filming soap bubbles. Moments of wry humor (Katrina checks messages at "mumblemail.net") and some *Ghost World*-ish jabs at mainstream go-getters (including a moving-company douchebag who hires Eli to help clean out a recently-deceased woman's house) keep *Some Days* from being a total downer, but be warned: this is one melancholy movie. Shins fans will enjoy the scene where Eli, alone in his room, rehearses for a yearned-for karaoke date with a Bonnie Tyler classic. (1:33) *Roxie.* (Eddy)

ONGOING

The Adjustment Bureau (1:39) *1000 Van Ness, Shattuck, Sundance Kabuki.*

Arthur (1:45) *Empire, Four Star, Marina, 1000 Van Ness, SF Center, Sundance Kabuki.*

» **Battle: Los Angeles** (1:57) *1000 Van Ness.*

» **Bill Cunningham New York** (1:24) *Embarcadero, Shattuck.*

» **Cedar Rapids** (1:26) *Shattuck.*

Certified Copy (1:46) *Opera Plaza, Shattuck, Smith Rafael.*

» **Hanna** The title character of *Hanna* falls perfectly into the lately very popular Hit-Girl mold. Add a dash of *The Boys from Brazil*-style genetic engineering — Hanna has the unfair advantage, you see, when it comes to squashing other kids on the soccer field or maiming thugs with her bare hands — and you have an ethereal killing/survival machine, played with impassive confidence by *Atonement* (2007) shit-starter Saoirse Ronan. She's been fine-tuned by her father, Erik (Eric Bana), a spy who went out into the cold and off the grid, disappearing into the wilds of Scandinavia where he home-schooled his charge with an encyclopedia and brutal self-defense and hunting tests. *Atonement* director Joe Wright plays with a snowy palette associated with innocence, purity, and death — this could be any time or place, though far from the touch of modern childhood stresses: that other Hannah (Montana), consumerism, suburban blight, and academic competition. The 16-year-old Hanna, however, isn't immune from that desire to succeed. Her game mission: go from a feral, lonely existence into the modern world, run for her life, and avenge the death of her mother by killing Erik's CIA handler, Marissa (Cate Blanchett). The nagging doubt: was she born free, or Bourne to be a killer? Much like the illustrated Brothers Grimm storybook that she studies, Hanna is caught in an evil death trap of fairytale allegories. One wonders if the super-soldier apple didn't fall far from the tree, since evil stepmonster Marissa oversaw the program that produced Hanna — the older woman and the young girl have the same cold-blooded talent for destruction and the same steely determination. Yet there's hope for the young 'un. After learning that even her beloved father hid some basic truths from her, this natural-born killer seems less likely to go along with the predetermined ending, happy or no, further along in her storybook life. (1:51) *Empire, 1000 Van Ness, Presidio, SF Center, Sundance Kabuki.* (Chun)

Hop (1:30) *1000 Van Ness, Presidio, Shattuck.*

I Am (1:16) *Shattuck.*

» **In a Better World** Winner of this year's Best Foreign Language Film Oscar, this latest from Danish director Susanne Bier (2004's *Brothers*, 2006's *After the Wedding*) and her usual co-scenarist Anders Thomas Jensen (2005's *Adam's Apples*, 2003's *The Green Butchers*) is a typically engrossing, complex drama that deals with the kind of rage for "personal justice" that can lead to school and workplace shootings, among other things (like terrorism). Shy, nervous ten-year-old Elias (Markus Rygaard) needs a confidence boost, but things are worrying both at home and elsewhere. His parents are estranged, and his doting father (Mikael Persbrandt) is mostly away as a field hospital in Kenya tending victims of local militias. At school, he's an easy mark for bullies, a fact which gets the attention of charismatic, self-assured new kid Christian (William Jøhnk Nielsen), who appoints himself Elias' new (and only) friend — then when his slightly awed pal is picked on again, intervenes with such alarming intensity that the police are called. Christian appears a little too prone to violence and harsh judgment in teaching "lessons" to those he considers in the wrong; his own domestic situation is another source of anger, as he simplistically blames his earnest, distracted executive father (Ulrich Thomsen) for his mother's recent cancer death. Is Christian a budding little psychopath, or just a kid haplessly channeling his profound loss? Regardless, when an adult bully (Kim Bodnia as a loutish mechanic) humiliates Elias' father in front of the two boys, Christian pulls his reluctant friend into a pursuit of vengeance that surely isn't going to end well. With their nuanced yet head-on treatment of hot button social and ethical issues, Bier and Jensen's work can sometimes border on overly-schematic melodrama, meting out its own secular-humanist justice a bit too handily, like 21st-century cinematic Dickenses. But like Dickens, they also have a true mastery of the creating striking characters and intricately propulsive plotlines that illustrate the points at hand in riveting, hugely satisfying fashion. This isn't their best. But it's still pretty excellent, and one of those universally accessible movies you can safely recommend even to people who think they don't like foreign or art house films. (1:53) *Embarcadero, Shattuck.* (Harvey)

Insidious (1:42) *1000 Van Ness.*

» **Jane Eyre** (2:00) *Albany, Embarcadero, Piedmont, Sundance Kabuki.*

Kill the Irishman (1:46) *Lumiere.*

The King's Speech (1:58) *Empire, Red Vic, Shattuck.*

» **Limitless** (1:37) *California, 1000 Van Ness, SF Center, Sundance Kabuki.*

» **The Lincoln Lawyer** (1:59) *Four Star, 1000 Van Ness, SF Center, Sundance Kabuki.*

Max Manus One of Norway's most expensive films to date, *Max Manus* follows the rise to infamy of the title character, a charismatic World War II resistance fighter whose specialty was blowing up German ships docked in occupied Oslo harbor. Again, I emphasize: this is a World War II movie about Norway made by Norwegians — though the Brits play a role, there's nary a mention of the United States. That fact is the single most refreshing part of a movie that's nonetheless clearly been inspired by stateside war epics, with traumatic flashbacks, male bonding, sadistic Nazis, rousing if familiar-sounding dialogue ("Being a commando takes more than courage!"), etc. Star Aksel Hennie anchors a film that's painted in pretty broad strokes with a nuanced performance befitting the real-life Manus' legacy as an everyman who became a hero. (1:58) *Balboa. (Eddy)*

Miral (1:42) *Opera Plaza.*

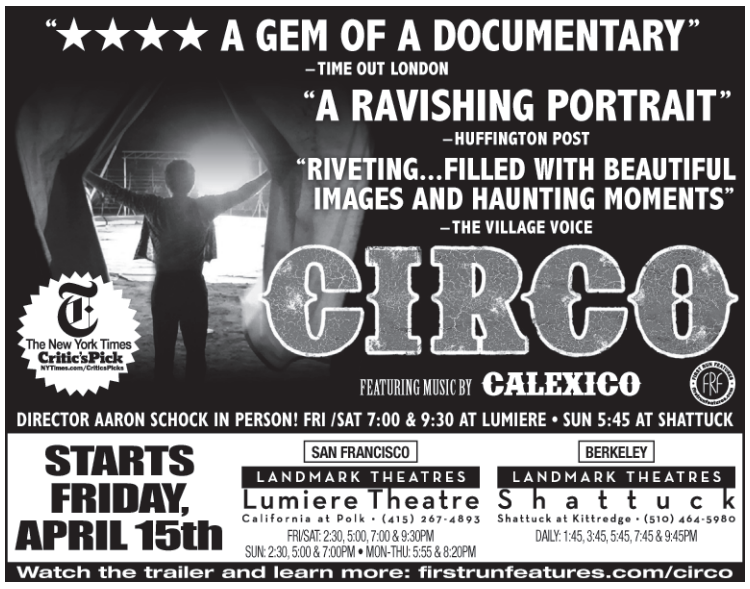
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ONGOING

CONT››

Of Gods and Men (2:00) *Albany, Opera Plaza.*
Paul (1:44) *1000 Van Ness.*
Poetry Sixtysomething Mija (legendary South Korean actor Yun Jung-hee) impulsively crashes a poetry class, a welcome shake-up in a life shaped by unfulfilling routines. In order to write compelling verse, her instructor says, it is important to open up and really see the world. But Mija's world holds little beauty beyond her cheerful outfits and beloved flowers; most pressingly, her teenage grandson, a mouth-breathing lump who lives with her, is completely remorseless about his participation in a hideous crime. In addition, she's just been disgnosed with the early stages of Alzheimer's, and the elderly stroke victim she housekeeps for has started making inappropriate advances. Somehow writer-director Lee Chang-dong (2007's *Secret Sunshine*) manages not to deliver a totally depressing film with all this loaded material; it's worth noting *Poetry* won the Best Screenplay Award at the 2010 Cannes Film Festival. Yun is unforgettable as a woman trying to find herself after a lifetime of obeying the wishes of everyone around her. *Though Poetry* is completely different in tone than 2009's *Mother*, it shares certain elements — including the impression that South Korean filmmakers have recognized the considerable rewards of showcasing aging (yet still formidable) female performers. (2:19) *Balboa, Opera Plaza, Shattuck, Smith Rafael.* (Eddy)
Potiche (1:43) *Clay, Shattuck, Smith Rafael.*
Rubber This starts out just on the right side of self-conscious prank, introducing a droll fourth-wall-breaking framework to a serenely surreal central conceit: An old car tire abandoned in the desert miraculously animates itself to commit widespread mayhem. Credit writer-director-editor-cinematographer-composer Quentin Dupieux for an original concept and terrific execution, as our initially wobby antihero wends its way toward civilization, discovering en route it can explode (or just crush) other entities with its "mind." Which this rumbling black ring of discontent very much enjoys doing, to the misfortune of various hapless humans and a few small animals. Rubber is an extended Dadaist joke that has adventurous fun with filmic and genre language. Beautifully executed as it is, the concept tires (ahem) after a while, reality-illusion games and comedic flair flagging by degrees. Still, it's so polished and resourceful a treatment of an utterly peculiar idea that no self-respecting cult film fan will want to say they didn't see this during its initial theatrical run. (1:25) *Lumiere.* (Harvey)
Soul Surfer (1:46) *1000 Van Ness, SF Center.*
Source Code (1:33) *Marina, 1000 Van Ness, Sundance Kabuki.*
Sucker Punch (2:00) *1000 Van Ness.*
Super (1:36) *Lumiere.*
Win Win (1:46) *Bridge, California, Piedmont, SF Center.*
Winter in Wartime (1:43) *Smith Rafael.*
Your Highness One of the dangers of reviewing a film like *Your Highness* is that stoner comedies have a very specific intended audience. A particular altered state is recommended to maximize one's enjoyment. I tend not to show up for professional gigs with Mary Jane as my plus-one, so I had to view the latest from *Pineapple Express* (2008) director David Gordon Green through un-bloodshot eyes. While *Express* was more explicitly ganja-themed, *Your Highness* is instead a comedy that approximates the experience of getting as high as possible, then going directly to Medieval Times. Never gut-bustingly funny, *Your Highness* still reaps chuckles from its hard-R dialogue and plenty of CG-assisted sight gags involving genetalia. James Franco and Danny McBride star as princes, one heroic and one ne'er-do-well, who quest to save a maiden kidnapped by an evil wizard (Justin Theroux). Natalie Portman turns up as a thong-wearing warrior, just 'cause it's that kind of movie. Forget the box office; only time and the tastes of late-night movie watchers will dictate whether *Your Highness* is a success or a bust. Case in point: nobody thought much of *Half Baked* (1998) when it was released, but in certain circles, it's become a bona fide classic. Say it with me now: "Fuck you, fuck you, fuck you, you're cool, and fuck you. I'm out!" (1:42) *1000 Van Ness, Presidio, SF Center, Sundance Kabuki.* (Eddy) **SFBG**



rep clock

Schedules are for Wed/13–Tues/19 except where noted. Director and year are given when available. Double and quadruple features are marked with a •. All times are p.m. unless otherwise specified.

ARTISTS' TELEVISION ACCESS 992 Valencia, SF; www.atasite.org. $6. "Radical Light: That Little Red Dot," curated and presented by Dale Hoyt, Thurs, 7:30. "Other Cinema:" "Jesse and Glenda Drew," country music doc-in-progress and other clips, Sat, 8:30.

BRAVA 2781 24th St, SF; www.brava.org. $15. **Will The Real Terrorist Please Stand Up?** (Landau, 2011), Sat, 7.

CASTRO 429 Castro, SF; (415) 621-6120, www.castrotheatre.com. $7.50-10. **True Grit** (Coen and Coen, 2010), Wed, 3, 5:30, 8. **•Picnic at Hanging Rock** (Weir, 1975), Thurs, 2:30, 7, and **The Passenger** (Antonioni, 1975), Thurs, 4:35, 9:05. **•Bullitt** (Yates, 1968), Fri, 7, and **Freebie and the Bean** (Rush, 1974), Fri, 9:15. "Midnites for Maniacs: Heavy Metal Monster Mash:" **•Heavy Metal** (Potterton, 1981), Sat, 2:30; **The Monster Squad** (Dekker, 1987), Sat, 4:45; **This Is Spinal Tap** (Reiner, 1984), Sat, 7:30; **Trick or Treat** (Smith, 1986), Sat, 9:45; **Monster Dog** (Fragasso, 1984), Sat, 11:45. **The Ten Commandments** (DeMille, 1956), Sun, 2, 7. All five films, $13.

CHRISTOPHER B. SMITH RAFAEL FILM CENTER 1118 Fourth St, San Rafael; (415) 454-1222, www.cafilm.org. $6.50-15. **Certified Copy** (Kiarostami, 2010), call for dates and times. **Poetry** (Yun, 2010), call for dates and times. **Potiche** (Ozon, 2010), call for dates and times. **Winter in Wartime** (Koolhoven, 2009), call for dates and times.

HUMANIST HALL 390 27th St, Oakl; www.humanisthall.org. $5. **Coal Country** (Evans and Geller, 2011) Wed, 7.

MECHANICS' INSTITUTE 57 Post, SF; (415) 393-0100, rsvp@milibrary.org. $10. "CinemaLit Film Series: French Twist:" **Purple Noon** (Clement, 1960), Fri, 6.

MISSION CULTURAL CENTER FOR LATINO ARTS 2868 Mission, SF; www.writerscorps.org. Free. "Poetry Projection Project: A WritersCorps Film Event," short films based on youth writing, Sat, 2. Program repeats Tues/19, 11am and 1pm, San Francisco Public Library, 100 Larkin, SF.

PACIFIC FILM ARCHIVE 2575 Bancroft, Berk; (510) 642-5249, www.bampfa.berkeley.edu. $5.50-9.50. "Film 50: History of Cinema: Fantasy Films and Realms of Enchantment:" **Alien** (Scott, 1979), Wed, 3:10. "Alternative Visions:" **A Walk Into the Sea: Danny Williams and the Warhol Factory** (Robinson, 2007), Wed, 7:30. "First Person Rural: The New Nonfiction:" **Tropic of Cancer** (Polgovsky, 2004), Thurs, 7; **Sweetgrass** (Taylor and Barbash, 2010), Sun, 5:30. "Under the Skin: The Films of Claire Denis:" **Friday Night** (2002), Fri, 7; **Vers Mathilde** (2005), Fri, 8:50; **35 Shots of Rum** (2008), Sat, 8:40. "Patricio Guzmán:" **The Pinochet Case** (2001), Sat, 6:30; **•Chile, Obstinate Memory** (1997) and **A Village Fading Away** (1995), Sun, 3.

RED VIC 1727 Haight, SF; (415) 668-3994; www.redvicmoviehouse.com. $6-10. **Blue Valentine** (Cianfrance, 2010), Wed, 2, 7, 9:20. **The King's Speech** (Hooper, 2010), Thurs-Sat, 7, 9:30 (also Sat, 2, 4:30). **Another Year** (Leigh, 2010), Sun-Mon, 8 (also Sun, 2, 5). **The Big Lebowski** (Coen, 1998), Tues, 7, 9:30.

ROXIE 3117 and 3125 16th St, SF; (415) 863-1087, www.roxie.com. $5-9.75. "It's the Paul Meinberg! Show:" **Ladies Love Danger** (Humberstone, 1935), Wed, 7, 9:30; **Girl in 313** (Cortez, 1940), Wed, 9. "Charles Phoenix Retro Slide Show," Thurs, 8. This event, $25. **Some Days Are Better Than Others** (McCormick, 2010), April 15-21, 7 and 9 (also Sat-Sun, 2:30, 4:45). "Playback: ATA Film and Video Festival 2006-2010," Tues, 7:30. This event, $10.

VICTORIA THEATRE 2961 24th St, SF; www.peacheschrist.com. $15-20. "2011 San Francisco Underground Short Film Festival," Fri, 7:30 (shorts); **Devious, Inc.** (xuxE, 2011), Fri, 10:30.

YERBA BUENA CENTER FOR THE ARTS 701 Mission, SF; (415) 978-2787, www.ybca.org. $6-8. "Fearless: Chinese Independent Documentaries:" **1428** (Du, 2009), Thurs, 7:30; **Fortune Teller** (Xu, 2010), Sun, 2. **SFBG**

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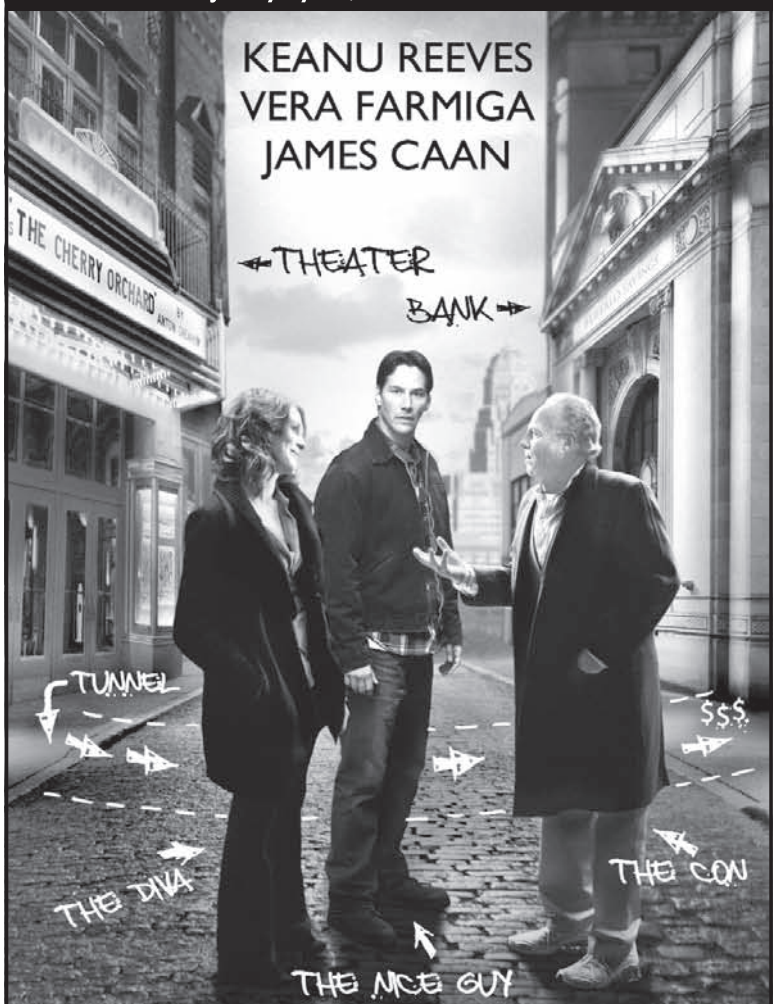
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Lumiere California/Polk. 267-4893.

Marina Theatre 2149 Chestnut. www.lntsf.com/marina_theatre

Metreon Fourth St/Mission. 1-800-FANDANGO.

Metro Union/Webster. 931-1685.

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Opera Plaza Van Ness/Golden Gate. 267-4893.

Presidio 2340 Chestnut. 776-2388.

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Vogue Sacramento/Presidio. 221-8183.

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Grand Lake 3200 Grand, Oakl. (510) 452-3556.

Jack London Stadium 100 Washington, Jack London Square, Oakl. (510) 433-1320.

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Emery Bay 6330 Christie, Emeryville. (510) 420-0107.

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› legal notices

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. 449264. The following person is doing business as **American International Mortgagors/dba/Title America Search Company**, 1524 1st Ave #403 Oakland, CA 94606. John M. Brooks, Robert J. Pittman Jr, 1524 1st Ave #403 Oakland, CA 94606. This business is conducted by a general partnership. Registrant commenced business under the above-listed fictitious business name on the date 10/18/04. Signed John M. Brooks. This statement was filed with the County Clerk the County of Alameda, CA by Patrick O'Connell on March 16, 2011. **#113331, March 23, 30, April 6 and 13, 2011**

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. A-0334090-00 The following person is doing business as **Cafe Pescatore**, 2455 Mason St San Francisco, CA 94111. This business is conducted by limited liability company. Registrant commenced business under the above-listed fictitious business name on the date N/A. Signed Albert Hwang. This statement was filed by Susanna Chin on March 10, 2011. **#113326. March 23, 30, April 6 and 13, 2011**

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. A-0334092-00 The following person is doing business as **Tuscan Inn**, 2455 Mason St San Francisco, CA 94111. This business is conducted by limited liability company. Registrant commenced business under the above-listed fictitious business name on the date N/A. Signed Albert Hwang. This statement was filed by Alan Wong on March 10, 2011. **#113327. March 23, 30, April 6 and 13, 2011**

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. A-0334166-00 The following person is doing business as **Afrosurreal San Francisco**, 2063 Bush St San Francisco, CA 94115. This business is conducted by an individual. Registrant commenced business under the above-listed fictitious business name on the date 3/14/11. Signed Douglas Scot Miller Jr. This statement was filed by Mariedyne L. Argente on March 14, 2011. **#113337. March 30, April 6, 13 and 20, 2011**

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. A-0334199-00 The following person is doing business as **BIO**, 75 O'Farrell St San Francisco, CA 94108. This business is conducted by a corporation. Registrant commenced business under the above-listed fictitious business name on the date 3/15/11. Signed Sylvia Krawec. This statement was filed by Maribel Jaldon on March 15, 2011. **#113329. March 23, 30, April 6 and 13, 2011**

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. A-0334231-00 The following person is doing business as **Chow's Garden**, 305 22nd Ave San Francisco, CA 94121. This business is conducted by an individual. Registrant commenced business under the above-listed fictitious business name on the date 3/16/11. Signed Cheung Fuk Chow. This statement was filed by Alan Wong on March 16, 2011. **#113328. March 23, 30, April 6 and 13, 2011**

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. A-0334310-00 The following person is doing business as **Balboa Construction**, 2230 Ocean Ave San Francisco, CA 94127. This business is conducted by an individual. Registrant commenced business under the above-listed fictitious business name on the date N/A. Signed Omar Hijazi. This statement was filed by Maribel Jaldon on March 21, 2011. **#113330. March 23, 30, April 6 and 13, 2011**

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. A-0334358-00 The following person is doing business as **La Fina Estampa**, 1407 Bush St San Francisco, CA 94109. This business is conducted by an individual. Registrant commenced business under the above-listed fictitious business name on the date N/A. Signed Veronica Shinzato. This statement was filed by Maribel Jaldon on March 22, 2011. **#113336. March 30, April 6, 13 and 20, 2011**

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. A-0334378-00 The following person is doing business as **Omar Super Clean House**, 3865 Fleetwood Dr San Bruno, CA 94066. This business is conducted by an individual. Registrant commenced business under the above-listed fictitious business name on the date 5/19/05. Signed Dany Omar Paz. This statement was filed by Magdalena Zevallos on March 23, 2011. **#113338. March 30, April 6, 13 and 20, 2011**

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. A-0334412-00 The following person is doing business as **NORTHERN UNIFIED BREWING** , 535 Bryant Street, San Francisco, CA 94107. This business is conducted by a corporation. Registrant commenced business under the above-listed fictitious business name on a date March 15th 2011. SignedDavid Rio Cofee and Tea Inc. This statement was filed by Susanna Chin on March 24th, 2011. **#35311. April 13th, April 20th, April 27th and May 4th, 2011**

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. A-0334464-00 The following person is doing business as **La Fusion**, 475 Pine St San Francisco, CA 94104. This business is conducted by an individual. Registrant commenced business under the above-listed fictitious business name on the date 3/1/11. Signed Jose E Bonilla. This statement was filed by Karen J. Hong Yee on March 28, 2011. **#113339. March 30, April 6, 13 and 20, 2011**

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. A-0334555-00 The following person is doing business as **Quality Senior Care**, 15 Grijalva Dr San Francisco, CA 94132. This business is conducted by an individual. Registrant commenced business under the above-listed fictitious business name on the date 3/31/11. Signed Teresa Van Devere. This statement was filed by Mariedyne L. Argente on March 31, 2011. **#113340. April 6, 13, 20 and 27, 2011**

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. A-0334727-00 The following person is doing business as **PEACHES PATTIES** , 730 Victoria Street, San Francisco, CA 94127. This business is conducted by a general partnership. Registrant commenced business under the above-listed fictitious business name on a date N/A. Signed Shani Jones. This statement was filed by Meriedyne L. Argente on April 7th, 2011. **#35310. April 13th, April 20th, April 27th and May 4th, 2011**

NOTICE OF APPLICATION TO SELL ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES Date of Filing Application: **April 5, 2011**. To Whom It May Concern: The name of the applicant is: **CITY BEER STORE LLC**. The applicants listed above are applying to The Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control to sell alcoholic beverages at: 1168 Folsom Street, Unit 101, San Francisco, CA 94103-6027. Type of License Applied for: **42 ñ On-Sale Beer and Wine ñ Public Premises. Publication dates: April 13, 2011 L#991123**

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF GENDER CASE NUMBER: CPF-11-511136. SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO, 400 McAllister St. San Francisco, CA 94102. PETITION OF Paige V. Ramiro for change of name and gender. TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: Petitioner Paige V. Ramiro filed a petition with this court for a decree changing petitioner's name to: Petitioner has also filed a petition for a decree changing petitioner's gender from male to female. THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter shall appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name and gender should not be granted. NOTICE OF HEARING Date: May 17, 2011. Time: 9:00 AM room-514. Signed by Ellen Chaitin, Judge of the Superior Court on March 8, 2011. Endorsed Filed, San Francisco County Superior Court of California on March 8, 2011 by Param Natt, Deputy Clerk. **Publication dates: March 23, 30, April 6 and 13, 2011. L#113325**

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME CASE NUMBER: CNC-11-547633. SUPERIOR COURT, 400 McAllister St. San Francisco, CA 94102. PETITION of Mary Edith Martell for change of name. TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: Petitioner **Mary Edith Martell** filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows: Present Name: Mary Edith Martell Proposed Name: **Molly Oppenheimer Martell** . THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter shall appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted. NOTICE OF HEARING Date: May 31, 2011. Time: 9:00 AM Room ñ 514. Signed by Ellen Chaitin, Presiding Judge on March 30, 2011. Endorsed Filed San Francisco County Superior Court on March 30, 2011 by Deborah Steppe, Deputy Clerk. **Publication dates: April 13, 20, 27 and May 4, 2011. L#991124**

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME CASE NUMBER: CNC-11-547656. SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO, 400 McAllister St. San Francisco, CA 94102. PETITION OF Wayne E. Keen, Colette R. Keen and Aidan J. Keen for change of name. TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: Petitioner **WAYNE EDWARD KEEN** filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows: Present Name: WAYNE EDWARD KEEN. Proposed Name: **EDWARD LIAM RETOURNARD**. Present Name: AIDAN JEROME KEEN. Proposed Name: **AIDAN JEROME RETOURNARD**. Present Name: COLETTE RETAURNARD KEEN. Proposed Name: **COLETTE MARIE RETOURNARD**. THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter shall appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted. NOTICE OF HEARING Date: June 14, 2011. Time: 9:00 AM room - 514. Signed by Ellen Chaitin, Presiding Judge on April 8, 2011. Endorsed Filed, San Francisco County Superior Court of California on April 8, 2011 by Dennis Toyama Clerk. **Publication date(s): April 13th, April 20th, April 27th and May 4th, 2011 L#432615.**

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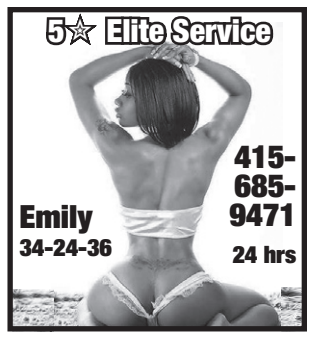
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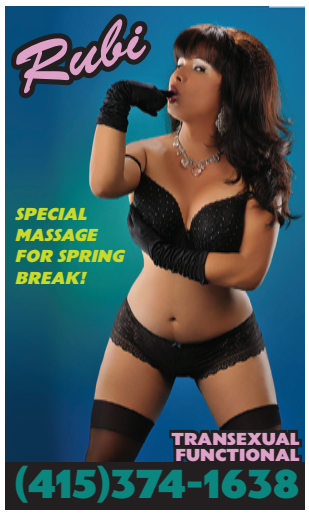




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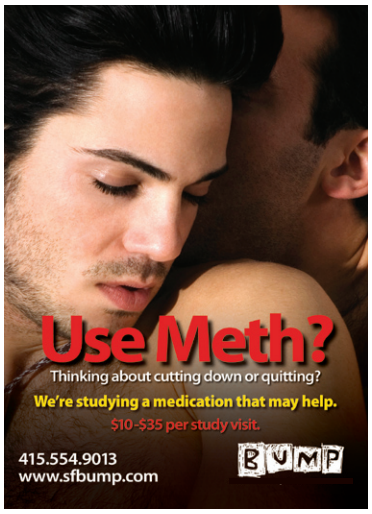
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